ain

tf

aen

# Justorum Semita.

LONDON:
GILBERT & RIVINGTON, PRINTERS,
ST. JOHN'S SQUARE.

'19/2/1971- Dh 6

# Justorum Semita;

OR,

## THE PATH OF THE JUST.

James Augustine

A HISTORY OF THE SAINTS AND HOLYDAYS OF

THE PRESENT ENGLISH KALENDAR.

✠

"Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."
REV. xxii. 14.

"I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ, in my flesh, for His body's sake which is the Church."—COL. i. 24.

EDINBURGH:
R. GRANT & SON, PRINCES STREET.
ABERDEEN: A. BROWN & CO. LONDON: JAMES BURNS.

MDCCCXLIII.

# ADVERTISEMENT.

As the love and veneration of English Christians for the lesser Saints and Holydays of the Kalendar seem to be reviving, it has been thought advisable to offer this history of them in a separate form. Another volume will presently appear, containing the lives of our Blessed Lord, and of those Saints who are commemorated on the more solemn Festivals.

Feast of the Nativity of the
Blessed Virgin Mary,
MDCCCXLIII.

# CONTENTS.

---

## ERRATA.

| PAGE | LINE |
|---|---|
| xxvi | 14 from bottom, *for* "the only festivals" *read* "the only immoveable festivals" |
| 16 | Last, *for* "Maximin" *read* "Maximian" |
| 65 | 11 from bottom, *for* "Maximinian" *read* "Maximian" |
| 124 | 10 from bottom, *for* "Lord," *read* "Lord." |
| 134 | 1, *for* "souls" *read* "soul" |
| 161 | 1, *for* "the people" *read* "and the people" |
| 184 | 19, *for* "Salisbury" *read* "Oxford" |

By a late change, the chapel of S. George at Windsor is now included in the jurisdiction of Oxford.

# Of the Kalendar.

Next to the holy offices of the Church, the order of the Kalendar must be held dear by every Catholic Christian. It is a summary of the blessed commemorations which each sacred year brings in its train; and the holy services in which they are made are the animating principle of its cycle. Separated from it the Divine Office would be like the soul without the body; beautiful indeed and full of life, but imperfect. And as upon the human countenance the reigning dispositions of the soul are plainly pourtrayed, so is the Kalendar a lively image of the heavenly themes which the Divine Office leads us to contemplate. Hence it has always been held in greatest esteem when the services of the Church were most valued; and when it has been dishonoured and abolished, they have not failed to share its reproach. This will be evidently seen in its changeful history, to which our course will presently bring us.

Every national Church has its own Kalendar. Many of these are very ancient, as for example we read of a Roman Kalendar in the middle of the fourth century. Before that time it was the custom of the Christians to commemorate the Martyrs yearly upon the days on which they suffered. A record of these was kept in each church, and was called a Kalendar. At first it contained only the names of the martyrs, but afterwards the holy Confessors were added, who had witnessed a good confession for Christ, though they had not been honoured to die for Him.

After a time the Kalendar gave rise to the Martyrologies of the Saints, which contain brief notices of their lives and death. In later ages, these in the Western Church, and the

Menologies in the Eastern, were histories of the principal saints, which were generally read by the clergy and the monastic orders to excite their devotion and imitation. From being thus publicly read, many of those histories were called *Legenda;* and the name was gradually applied to any story of a saint, whether authentic or not. The earliest English martyrology was written by Ven. Bede in the eighth century, and contains very short notices of the saints of that age. It is rather a Kalendar than a Martyrology. The Roman martyrology was adopted in England in 747.

In every national Kalendar are found nearly the same names of our Divine Lord, His Blessed Mother, and His Apostles; as well as of many others who were eminent in the following ages for wisdom and sanctity. The degree of honour which is paid to these varies in almost every Church, according to their connexion with its history. There are also in every Kalendar the names of national and local saints, whose fame has not spread further than their own Church. Thus virtues and self-devotion unsurpassed in a heroic age, are often remembered only in the bosom of the family or little circle of friends who were favoured to witness them. Not the less precious are they, and worthy of imitation, but their praise is of God, and not of man. And surely to the heart which feels the beauty of secret holiness, nothing can be more touching than to know of saints of whom little is recorded but their names, hardly even the date of their departure. Dwelling many ages ago, in obscurity in deserts and remote islands, they gave to those around them so clear a reflection of the image of Christ, that for His sake they yet live in remembrance. How pure must have been their faith, how fragrant their deeds of charity, which without other aid have thus embalmed their memories. And so far from rendering their existence doubtful, the uncertain record of their names which is all that remains, is good evidence of perhaps a lifelong struggle with the lusts of the flesh, or of some work of love done to Christ or His poor brethren, which has not been without its reward. Like that blessed woman who anointed the Lord for His burial, and whose devotion is told for a memorial of her, wherever the Gospel is preached; and yet about whom

learned doctors are not agreed who of all the holy Maries she was.

The Anglican Kalendar has shared the fortunes of the English Church. It was once much larger and more Catholic than it is now; and was a more perfect summary of the sacred offices. Many holydays which are now omitted, or barely mentioned, had formerly special services; as the Transfiguration of our Lord, S. Mary Magdalene, S. Clement, "whose name is in the Book of Life," and many others. It is not for me to say whether such a change has improved it; rather am I anxious to commend to the faithful what is left, lest they lose all.

Among the holydays which it now contains, "some are higher days than others, in regard of the greatness of the blessing commemorated, and of the solemnity of the service appointed to them [1]." These are the principal festivals of the year, for which there are special offices, more or less varied according to the degree of honour that belongs to them. They are generally marked in red letters, or sometimes in old-English character. The end which the Church has in view in commemorating these greater holydays is thus taught us by bishop Sparrow, quoting from Hooker: "As the Jews had their Sabbath, which did continually bring to mind the former world finished by creation; so the Christian Church hath her Lord's days or Sundays, to keep us in perpetual remembrance of a far better world begun by Him who came to restore all things, to make heaven and earth new. The rest of the days and times which we celebrate have relation all unto our head, Christ. We begin therefore our ecclesiastical year (as to some accounts, though not as to the order of our service) with the glorious Annunciation of His Birth, by angelical message. Hereunto are added His blessed Nativity itself, the mystery of His legal Circumcision, the testification of His true Incarnation by the Purification of His blessed mother the Virgin Mary; His glorious Resurrection, and Ascension into heaven, the admirable sending down of His Spirit upon His chosen, and the notice of that incomprehensible Trinity thereby given to the Church of God.

[1] Bishop Sparrow.

"Again, forasmuch as we know that Christ hath not only been manifested great in Himself, but great in other His saints also; the days of whose departure out of the world are to the Church of Christ as the birth and coronation days of kings or emperors; therefore especial choice being made of the very flower of all occasions in this kind, there are annual selected times to meditate of Christ glorified in them which had the honour to suffer for His sake before they had age and ability to know Him, namely, the blessed Innocents: glorified in them who knowing Him, as S. Stephen, had the sight of that before death, whereinto so acceptable a death doth lead; glorified in those sages of the East that came from far to adore Him, and were conducted by strange light; glorified in the second Elias of the world, sent before Him to prepare His way; glorified in every of those Apostles whom it pleased Him to use as founders of His kingdom here; glorified in the Angels, as in S. Michael; glorified in all those happy souls that are already possessed of bliss. Besides these, be four days, annexed to the Feasts of Easter and Whitsunday, for the more honour and enlargement of those high solemnities [1]."

These Festivals are either *Moveable* or *Immoveable*. The annual return of the latter takes place on the same day of the year; while the return of the former depends in one part of the year upon the falling of Easter; and in Advent upon the day of the week on which the festival of S. Andrew occurs. It was ordered, in the Council of Nicea, in 325, that the Feast of Easter should be kept throughout the Church on the first Sunday after the full moon which happens upon the day of the vernal equinox or next after it; and if the new moon fall on a Sunday, Easter day is the Sunday after. The ninth Sunday before it is Septuagesima, or the Sunday within seventy days of the Pasch. Ash Wednesday follows in the third week after, that is, between Quinquagesima and the first Sunday in Lent. Palm Sunday introduces the Holy or Greater week, which is the last, in Lent. Easter Monday and Tuesday immediately follow the Festival of the Resurrection; forty days after is the Ascension; and on the fiftieth day from

[1] Rationale of Common Prayer, pp. 83, 84. Eccl. Polity, book v. chap. lxx. 8.

Easter is celebrated the Feast of Pentecost or Whit-Sunday, with Whit-Monday and Tuesday. Trinity Sunday which immediately follows with its long train of weekly festivals to which it gives its name, as it did anciently in the English Church, concludes the sacred year.

The occurrence of Advent Sunday is regulated by the day of the week on which the feast of S. Andrew falls; for the next Sunday to that, whether before or after, is the First in Advent. If Christmas-day fall on a Sunday or Monday, the second Sunday after is the First after the Epiphany; but if on any other day of the week, the Third Sunday. So also if Christmas-day happen on a Sunday, the following Sunday is the feast of the Circumcision, and the Sunday after Christmas is for that year omitted. The number of Sundays after Epiphany is regulated by the occurrence of Septuagesima; as the number after Trinity depends on the time of the year when Easter and consequently Trinity Sunday fall.

Upon four of the great festivals the celebration of the event which they commemorate is continued during the following week, or *Octave*, as it is called. This is an ancient custom, and is thus commended by the author of the Rationale of the Book of Common Prayer. "The subject matter of these feasts, as namely, Christ's Birth, Resurrection, Ascension, and the sending of the Holy Ghost, is of so high a nature, so nearly concerning our salvation, that one day is too little to meditate of them, and praise God for them as we ought. A bodily deliverance may justly require a day of thanksgiving and joy; but the deliverance of the soul, by the blessings commemorated on those times, deserves a much longer feast. It were injurious to good Christian souls to have their joy and thankfulness for such mercies confined to a day, therefore holy Church, upon the times when these unspeakable blessings were wrought for us, by her most seasonable commands and counsels here invites us to fill our hearts with joy and thankfulness, and let them overflow eight days together." The festival of Whit-Sunday is prolonged for only seven days, for the eighth day is devoted to the mystery of the Blessed Trinity.

Most of these days of solemnity are ushered in by a vigil or

fast, to remind us that those saints who are now comforted with the vision of God were once blessed mourners; and that it is only through mortification and affliction that we shall pass like them into glory and joy, according to the Scripture, Heaviness may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. Therefore the festival of S. Michael and all Angels has no vigil, because those blessed spirits were never like us compassed with infirmity. Sometimes the season of the year is too joyous to allow of fasting, and the holydays which occur during it have not a vigil. As formerly in the *Paschal* time, from Easter till the eve of Trinity Sunday, which generally falls between the beginning of April and the middle of June, and from Christmas-day till the end of the time of the Epiphany. S. Luke's day wants a vigil because its eve is devoted to the memory of a holy virgin, S. Ethelred. In the ancient Kalendar of the Church of Sarum there were no vigils between Christmas and Whitsuntide.

In former days in England, these principal festivals, which, as I have said, were then more numerous than now, were observed by a total cessation from all servile labour, as on Sundays. And on many of the lesser holydays agricultural labour alone was allowed, and sometimes not till after the vesper hour. That this is the way in which the Church still intends them to be kept holy I might easily show by abundant authorities; but I shall only quote the testimony of Hooker: "The sanctification of days and times is a token of that thankfulness and a part of that public honour which we owe to God for admirable benefits, whereof it doth not suffice that we keep a secret kalendar, taking thereby our private occasions, as we list ourselves, to think how much God hath done for all men, but the days which are chosen out to serve as public memorials of such His mercies ought to be clothed with those outward robes of holiness whereby their difference from other days may be made sensible. . . . . . 'This is the day which the Lord hath made,' saith the prophet David, 'let us rejoice and be glad in it.' So that generally offices and duties of religious joy are that wherein the hallowing of festival time consisteth. The most natural testimonies of our rejoicing in God are, first, His praises set forth with cheerful alacrity of

mind; secondly, our comfort and delight expressed by a charitable largeness of somewhat more than common bounty; thirdly, sequestration from ordinary labours, the toils and cares whereof are not meet to be companions of such gladness. Festival solemnity therefore is nothing but the due mixture as it were of these three elements, Praise, and Bounty, and Rest [1]."

A sight so blessed as our pious ancestors might behold in merry England on the morn of some glorious festival it is not for me to describe; hardly can imagination in these days pourtray the scene. For "a godless century," says Carlyle, "looking back on centuries that were godly, produces portraitures more miraculous than any other." "I will therefore," in the words of bishop Taylor, "deny leave to my own affections to ease themselves by complaining of others; I shall only crave leave that I may remember Jerusalem, and call to mind the pleasures of the temple, the order of her services, the beauty of her buildings, the sweetness of her songs, the decency of her ministrations, the assiduity and economy of her priests and levites, the daily sacrifice, and that eternal fire of devotion that went not out by day nor by night. These were the pleasures of our peace, and there is a remanent felicity in the very memory of those spiritual delights which we then enjoyed, as antepasts of heaven, and consignations to an immortality of joys. And it may be so again, when it shall please God who hath the hearts of all princes in His hand, and turneth them as the rivers of waters; and when men will consider the invaluable loss that is consequent, and the danger of sin that is appendant to the destroying forms of such discipline and devotion, in which God was purely worshipped and the Church was edified, and the people instructed to great degrees of piety, knowledge, and devotion [2]."

Besides the principal festivals, there are many other holydays in the Kalendar which in later days have been almost forgotten. "Alas! in spite of the variety of books now circulated among all classes of the community," cries an eloquent

[1] Eccl. Polity, book v. chap. lxx. 1, 2.
[2] Apology for the Liturgy.

doctor, "how little is known about the saints of past times? How is this? Has Christ's Church failed in any age? or have His witnesses betrayed their trust? Are they not our bone and our flesh? Have they not partaken the same spiritual food as ourselves, and the same spiritual drink, used the same prayers, and confessed the same creed? If a man merely look into the Prayer-book he will meet there with names about which perhaps he knows and cares nothing at all. What do these names mean? Sad it is, you have no heart to inquire after and celebrate those who are fellow-citizens with you, and your great benefactors. . . . . . Truly they were in their day men of God; they were rulers and teachers in the Church; they had received by succession of hands the power first given to the Apostles, and now to us. They laboured, and suffered, and fainted not, and their writings remain to this day [1]."

Their place in the Kalendar may teach us that the English Church has some purpose in commemorating them; and that at least they ought not to be as little regarded by us as if they were not commemorated at all. Alas! that there should have arisen men in high station in the Church, who have laboured to prove that they merely serve a worldly purpose, and hardly deserve to be named. The field of controversy is to be avoided, but here something must be said regarding this unworthy view of the Kalendar. Mr. Wheatley, in his "*Rational Illustration of the Book of Common Prayer*," gives a short history of these holydays, which has been adopted in the edition of the Prayer-book by bishop Mant. He introduces his history of them in these words: "As to the Popish holydays retained in our Kalendar. . . . . Since some small account of these has been desired by some persons, I shall here insert it, to gratify their curiosity." And to the remarks which follow he prefixes this title, "Of the Romish Saints' Days and Holydays in general;" and to each month, "Of the Romish Saints' Days and Holydays in *January*, *February*, &c." With what justice can these holydays be called "Romish," or "Popish," as implying that they have

[1] Mr. Newman's Sermons, Vol. iii. Serm. 17.

a Roman origin, when, of sixty-seven days included in their number, sixteen are of Eastern origin, seventeen are British, fifteen French, two African, one Spanish, and five Italian and Sicilian; leaving only eleven *Romish* Saints? And of these, thirty-one commemorate persons or events before the first general council in 325; fifty-two before the sixth general council in 680; and fifty-seven before the schism between the Latin and Greek Churches in the ninth century; while the remaining ten are all English.

But if *Romish* means what was sanctioned by the Western Church for many centuries, then indeed the name is truly given. And what is there which the Anglican Church retains which is not in this sense Romish? Nay, many things in her ritual, which are justly cherished as venerable, are much more so. Nearly all the Collects in the Book of Common Prayer are translations from the *Roman* Missal, through the medium of the *Sarum* and other offices, which were given to the English Church by the Bishop of Rome. And the Epistles and Gospels for Sundays and such festivals as have special ones appointed, are chosen from the same source. In these things the Greek and African Churches are much less regarded than in the Kalendar, yet there is never a whisper of their being Romish. I forbear to mention the many glorious edifices and wealthy foundations which the Anglican Church makes use of, notwithstanding their Romish origin. Is the memory of the saints the only thing which must be disparaged as Romish? Better were it that the mere mockery of a Kalendar, for such it becomes, were done away, and that their blessed names with many other pious monuments of ancient times were consigned to quiet forgetfulness, than that they should be thus commemorated with a scornful pity. Who shall draw the line of distinction between what is Romish, yet may be kept; and what is not more so, but must be discarded? The Puritan says Episcopacy, and Liturgies, and solemn order, and the sign of the Cross are Romish. And the nominal Episcopalian for the same reason condemns the Eucharistic Sacrifice, and Priestly Absolution, and Penance, and deep outward reverence for holy things and places. The rule for the observance of Friday as a fast-day, which Mr. Wheatley

defends, rests on no stronger authority than the holydays; both are enjoined in the Kalendar. Till this variety of opinion is settled on some more enduring ground than the mere affirmation of a private person, or of a body of men acting privately, and not as the authorized representatives of the Anglican Church, we may with good reason doubt the consistency of measuring what is *Romish* merely by what falls in with the pre-established theory of any doctor however eminent. And if the Kalendar is generally and properly named according to the Church to which it belongs, this Kalendar is truly *Anglican*. For the English Church was called *Ecclesia Anglicana* long before its separation from the communion of western Christendom.

Mr. Wheatley then proceeds to give four reasons why the *Popish* holydays were retained in our Kalendar; which may be thus shortly stated.

*First*, "Upon account of our courts of justice, which usually make their returns on these days, or else upon the days before or after them."

*Secondly*, "For the sake of such tradesmen and handicraftsmen, and others, as were wont to celebrate the memory of their Tutelar Saints."

*Thirdly*, "Churches being in several places dedicated to [God in honour of] some or other of these saints, it has been the usual custom in such places to have wakes or fairs kept upon those days: so that the people would probably have been displeased if, either in this or the former case, their favourite saint's name had been left out of the Kalendar."

*Fourthly*, "The histories which were writ before the Reformation do frequently speak of transactions happening upon such holydays, or about such a time, without mentioning the month: so that, had these names been quite left out of the Kalendar, we might be at a loss to know when several of these transactions happened."

He thus concludes his preliminary remarks: "For the foregoing reasons our Reformers thought convenient to retain the names of these days in the Kalendar, though not with any regard of being kept holy by the Church. For this they thought prudent to forbid, as well upon the account of the

great inconveniency brought into the Church in the times of Popery, by the observation of such a number of holydays, to the great prejudice of labouring and trading men: as by reason that many of those saints they then commemorated were oftentimes men of none of the best characters. Besides, the history of these saints, and the account they gave of the other holydays were frequently found to be feigned and fabulous. For which reason, I suppose the generality of my readers would excuse my giving them or myself any further trouble upon this head: but being sensible that there are some people who are particularly desirous of this sort of information, I shall for their sakes subjoin a short account of every one of these holydays, as they lie in their order. But must first bespeak my readers not to think that I endeavour to impose all these stories upon him as truths; but to remember that I have already given him warning that a great part of the account will be feigned and fabulous. And therefore I presume he will excuse my burdening him with testimonies, since though I could bring testimonies for everything I shall say, yet I cannot promise that they will be convincing. But however I promise to invent nothing of my own, nor to set down anything but what the blind Romanists superstitiously believe."

If *all* the histories which he promises to give were mere fictions, there would be less injustice in this careless and even scornful mention of them. But since only "a great part of the account is feigned and fabulous," some of it must be true and authentic. Yet there is no attempt made to separate the one from the other, or to guide those who are unacquainted with the subject in their search. An air of discredit is thrown over the whole, notwithstanding the appearance of candour in the admission that there is some truth mixed up with fable. As far as may be gathered from his manner of relating them, the lives of S. Ambrose, S. Austin, S. Jerome, and other Fathers and Doctors of the Church are as fabulous as any of the strange legends which he relates. One might have thought that the more the true facts were overlaid with rubbish, the more precious would they become, and the worthier of being set forth in their purity by a careful separation. And if ever

so few of these histories are true they are the lives of holy and devoted men who now see God. And even those narratives which are doubtful may at least be the lives of such, and on the possibility of their being so ought to be spoken of with great reverence. Did these names come together by chance? Is their honour to be thus jested away by a light word? Are they not rather part of a priceless treasure which the Catholic Church values above rubies, and even if she cannot trace the minute history of each, she firmly believes that it belongs to a bright jewel in the crown of her God? We are bound to examine, and if our search should end only in uncertainty, it is no less our duty to speak with respect of what remains doubtful, distrusting our own discernment rather than the truth and wisdom of former ages of the Church.

It would serve no purpose to point out many inaccuracies in the histories which follow; such as that S. Hilary died in exile; and, in a later edition, that "our second Reformers under Queen Elizabeth thought convenient to restore the names of these saints to the Kalendar." But these inaccuracies are sometimes of great importance, as throwing a light upon the theory which he undertakes to establish. Thus on the 7th of August,—the festival of the *Name of Jesus*,—he remarks that "this day was formerly dedicated to the memory of Afra, a woman of irregular life in Crete, who being converted to Christianity suffered martyrdom, and was commemorated on this day; though since the Reformation it has been dedicated to the name of Jesus." Why is not the present celebration, to which it is now set apart, mentioned first? What has S. Afra to do with the name of this day in the Anglican Kalendar? Why is it made answerable for more than it professes to record? Above all, why is a name allotted to this day which does not occur at all in the Kalendar of the Western Church? S. Afra is celebrated in the *Lives of the Saints* on the 5th of August, but the missals and breviaries of the West take no notice of her. And again, the *Name of Jesus* is to be found in the Kalendar of the Church of Sarum long before "the Reformation." This complication of mistakes is, to say the least, suspicious. A holyday now ordered to be observed is set aside in an inferior place, to make way for a saint

less known than many others, and which the Western Church has never commemorated. And the merit of the substitution of so unexceptionable a feast as that of the *Name of Jesus* is claimed for "the Reformation," contrary to the truth of history. Mr. Wheatley dares not to include that venerable name in his catalogue of *Romish Saints' days*, and so is constrained to invent a former commemoration for this day, and to forget that the present is really more *Romish* than the alleged ancient one. How unfavourably does this example illustrate his theory! Supposing his account of it to be true, how are we to explain the place of this holyday in the Kalendar? The name of the saint who on his supposition, and in accordance with his theory, should have been preserved to mark the day either for the people or the historian, he declares to be erased, and a new title given to the day. But this new name, coming as he says after the Reformation, can fulfil none of the purposes which he makes the holydays serve. Nor is the true state of the case more favourable to his theory. For if it seem at first to confirm it, by showing that this holyday is no exception to it, the evident reason of his allowing it to appear an exception must not be forgotten. He had this alternative,—either to describe this holyday as appointed like the rest before the sixteenth century, and so include it among the "*Romish Saints' days* whose feigned and fabulous histories the blind Romanists superstitiously believe;" or to make it pass for a festival of "the Reformation," and thus at the expense of a little discredit to his theory allow it to be mentioned with honour, even though on his principles it is useless. Religion prevailed over logic, and the result we have seen. He does not solve the difficulty in a later edition of his work by concluding his account of S. Afra with these words: "How it came afterwards to be dedicated to the *Name of Jesus* I do not find."

In the same way Mr. Wheatley prefixes to his account of Lammas a history of the festival of S. Peter's chains, which has no place in the present Anglican Kalendar. And he concludes by saying that "the Popish people thought the mass of this day very beneficial to make their lambs thrive." This is surely one of the lessons of the holyday instead of being a

circumstance of discredit. For the pious have always believed that whatever they undertake is assisted by the prayers of the Church.

Mr. Wheatley has also found a feast for the 2nd of November, of which the Anglican Kalendar now knows nothing. He seems to go out of his way to find legends to eke out his histories, as if he had not prepared the minds of his readers to find enough of them in the Kalendar itself. Every such addition helps more completely to confuse the true and fabulous stories. And nothing does so more effectually than relating a legend of a true character, as of S. Benedict, instead of giving the simple particulars of his life. These legends may be individually true or false; and so may the serious histories; but the former have an air of improbability upon the face of them, and therefore increase the suspicious and *Popish* appearance of the whole narrative. A legend is generally presumed to be fabulous; while unprejudiced minds are inclined to believe the unadorned biography of a holy man. Hence in order to create a presumption at first sight against the whole history of the saints and holydays, it is only necessary to relate an occasional legend, which strengthens the incredulous in their disbelief in the narrative, and acts unfavourably on the minds even of those who are inclined to believe much. And no one can read Mr. Wheatley's chapter on the Kalendar without being painfully convinced that this was his design throughout. Yet this manner of narrating these histories supplies us with an encouraging reflection. If those who choose to do so may thus transfer from the fabulous some of its romance to the historical, others may claim for what is pronounced at first sight to be feigned a more careful examination, for the sake of what is allowed by all to be authentic.

According to Mr. Wheatley's theory an inevitable necessity was imposed upon the framers of the present Kalendar to retain many of the *Romish holydays* in it; 1st, for the sake of the courts of justice; 2nd, for the tradesmen who had tutelar saints among them; 3rd, for fixing the time of wakes and fairs; and 4th, for determining the dates of events which had been referred to a holyday instead of to the day of the year. If this theory be true, a natural question arises, how the

people were so easily persuaded in 1548, immediately after King Edward's accession, to forego all their favourite saints and holydays, and to allow the Kalendar to be reduced to the present red-letter days? And how did they so patiently suffer this loss from the year 1559, when the Kalendar of King Edward VI. was restored on Queen Mary's decease, till 1604, when King James gave them back their tutelar saints. How also did the courts of justice, and the wakes and fairs, and the historians go on so long without a record of these holydays in the Kalendar? The same influence, which in 1559 thus reconciled those who had seen the ancient observance of them, to their total suppression, might surely after the lapse of nearly half a century, have also persuaded their children and grandchildren in 1604, who had never seen the ancient observance, to live contentedly without a record of the *saints' days*, or at least to keep their memories alive in their own way, without being grievously "displeased if their favourite saint's name were left out of the Kalendar." Had a monarch such as King Edward VI. filled the throne instead of King James I., or King Charles II., "the histories which were writ before the Reformation" must have remained sealed books till this day, as far at least as the Kalendar of the Prayer-Book could have given any assistance. And the courts of justice must have suffered a total loss of all record of their "days of return." For it is evident that the people, the lawyers, and the decipherers of dates had much less influence in the framing of the Kalendar than the king and the convocation, or else they would not so silently have borne the act of the sovereign and the clergy which deprived them of it.

Again, Mr. Wheatley's theory does not explain the titles of distinction and respect which were added to the names of the saints in 1662, which were not added in 1604. The nativity of our Ladye is as well recorded for all popular, legal, and historical purposes under the title of *Nativity of Mary* (1604) as under the more honourable title of *Nativity of Blessed Virgin Mary* (1662). The festival of S. Anne is not better preserved as *S. Anne Mother of the Blessed Virgin Mary* (1662) than as *Anne* (1604). And *Hierome* (1604) is as distinct mention of the saint as *S. Jerome, Presbyter, Confessor, and Doctor* (1662).

These names I take by chance; the Kalendar supplies an abundance of other examples.

Of the four reasons which Mr. Wheatley gives, the first can apply only to those holydays which fall within the law Terms, and which commonly regulate their days of return. Very few of the lesser holydays are used for this purpose. And the number of days to which the second reason refers is also small. So that the third and fourth are really the most important. But if the third reason has any weight, where shall we find a guide to the principle of *selection* which influenced the framers of the present Kalendar in rejecting many names while they admitted others. Either all the saints to whom churches were formerly dedicated, and in whose honour wakes and fairs were on that account held, are now in the Kalendar; or there must have been an additional reason for the omission of some of them, which this theory does not account for. Stow, in his *Survey of London*, says that in the city of London, in the reign of King Henry II., 1154—1189, there were thirteen great conventual, and one hundred and twenty-six smaller parish churches. Among these, there were four under the invocation of S. Buttolph; four, of S. Olave; one, of S. Christopher; one, of S. Gabriel; one, of S. Magnus; one, of S. Pancrate; one, of S. Mildred; one, of S. Fauster; one, of S. Bridget; one, of S. Parnel; and one, of S. Anthony. That these remained till later times is proved by the fact that, after the great fire in 1666, among the churches that were ordered to be rebuilt were S. Olave's, S. Buttolph's, S. Pancras', S. Magnus', S. Mildred's, and S. Vedast's. And in London at this day there are churches dedicated in honour of S. Sepulchre, S. Olave, S. Antholin, S. Vedast, S. Magnus, S. Pancras, and S. Mildred. Many other names of saints not now included in the Kalendar, but in whose honour churches have been dedicated, might be found by searching in other cities and towns in England; but this example is sufficient to show that the Kalendar does not contain all such saints. And if one chief reason for retaining the holydays in it was that churches had been dedicated in honour of them, why were these omitted? For many of these are at least quite as celebrated as some that are now in the Kalendar.

In the *Chronology of History*, pp. 104—115, there is reprinted from another work on the same subject, a British Kalendar, compiled from the missals of Sarum, York, Durham, and S. Paul's in London. The assistance of those of Hereford, Bangor, and Lincoln is wanting, and yet almost any one month contains the names of as many saints as the whole of the modern Kalendar. Among these surely there must be some that were in ancient days esteemed "favourite saints" by the people.

Against the fourth reason the presumption is still stronger. For besides the numerous saints who are not now found in the Kalendar, and who as is well known gave their names to dates, there are many Sundays and great festivals which are known in chronology by the first words of the introit. Thus *Ad Te levavi* is a name frequently given to the first Sunday in Advent; *Lætare Jerusalem*, to the fourth Sunday in Lent. A list of these, occupying fifteen pages closely printed in double columns, is given in the *Chronology of History;* and a chronological Kalendar which should want such a list, though it should contain the names of all the saints, would, as every antiquarian knows, be nearly useless. Among such days, the principle of *selection* is wholly inadmissible, if there is any truth in this fourth reason. For if any day under whatever name has been referred to as marking a date in history, it must be recorded in a Kalendar which professes to be a guide to such dates. And to be of any use at all for the purpose, it must contain every such day. Supposing there were formerly two hundred days referred to by particular names in ancient histories and deeds, and that fifty of them now remain in the Kalendar, is it a sufficient explanation of the presence of these fifty to say that they were intended to fix the date of the transactions which happened upon them? Unless some more important claim can be alleged in their favour, no one can forbear to ask why are not the other one hundred and fifty also in the Kalendar? for they were not less the names of important dates, and their omission cannot be compensated, as far at least as chronology is concerned, by the preservation of the fifty.

But again, and finally, the festival of S. Luke has no vigil, "because," as Mr. Wheatley says, "the eve of that saint was

formerly itself a celebrated holyday in the Church of England, viz. the feast of S. Ethelred [1]." Do any of the usual reasons for accounting for the lesser holydays explain the omission of the vigil of so eminent a saint as the holy Evangelist Luke, because it falls on one of them? If the lesser holydays are wholly secular, as Mr. Wheatley labours to prove, surely one of them would not have been allowed to interfere with the due observance of a principal festival, which is altogether religious. This is a difficulty; and Mr. Wheatley thus explains it: "But that reason being now removed, I suppose every one is left to his own liberty as to his private devotions, whether he will observe the eve as a vigil or not." The question is, not what any one may do in his private devotions, but what rule is laid down by the framers of the Kalendar to regulate the practice of the English Church. Can any one doubt, that if they had intended a vigil to be kept on the eve of S. Luke, they would have ordered it, as was done in the Prayer-Book of King Edward, where the only feasts which were appointed without a vigil-fast were those of S. John Evangelist, and of SS. Philip and James? And since they have not done so, does it not follow that they considered the former "reason *not* removed?" This consideration is much supported by observing that the system of vigils is very different in the present English Kalendar from what it was in the ancient. In the Kalendar of Sarum, the only festivals which had vigils were those of S. John Baptist, S. James, S. Bartholomew, S. Matthew, All Saints, S. Andrew, S. Thomas, and the Nativity. These all fall between Whitsuntide and Christmas; from Christmas to Whitsuntide there were no vigils. And therefore when the framers of the present Kalendar so far departed from former usage as to add several vigils which were not in it before, it is not to be supposed that they acted without consideration when they left the feast of S. Luke as before without its vigil. The reason for its ancient want of it is allowed by Mr. Wheatley; and he neither maintains that the Church has since appointed one, nor has he shown any new reason for its absence; is it possible to avoid the conclusion that the ancient reason is not removed?

[1] Rational Illustration, chap. v. Introduction, v. 3.

Where then are we to look for a true explanation of these holydays? The reasons which Mr. Wheatley gives may have had a secondary influence on the minds of the framers of the Kalendar, but they want the universality of application to every instance which a true and principal reason must have. Unless indeed we suppose that they acted without any system, which will not readily be believed. But we need not look further than to the proceedings of the Conference at the *Savoy* in the reign of King Charles II., to find a solution of the difficulty. Among other objections which the Puritans and Presbyterians urged was one against these holydays. And the reply which the clergy made to it is in these words: "The other names are left in the Kalendar, not that they should be kept holydays, but they are useful for the preservation of their memories; and for other reasons, as for leases, law-days, &c."

We must not forget that the English Church here takes the very lowest ground, in order to avoid giving unnecessary offence to the schismatical party. Nevertheless we thankfully accept this as one reason for the preservation of these blessed names in the Kalendar; a reason which no member of the English Church can refuse to acknowledge. And now the difficulties which beset Mr. Wheatley's theory vanish away. For we discover that the people were deprived of their Saints' days for a time, because their rulers spiritual and temporal had ceased to value the memories of the saints. But some of them were restored, when a more reverend and catholic spirit had returned to the English Church. That there might then have been many more with equal justice restored does not throw any discredit upon the principle of the restoration of a few; it only affects the arbitrary measure of eminence which the restorers fixed for their own guidance in choosing some and rejecting others. "The principle," says the Quarterly Reviewer, "upon which certain festivals of devotion still retained in the Kalendar prefixed to the Common Prayer, and usually printed in italics, were selected from among the rest is more obscure. Many of them evidently indicate names which had been peculiarly honoured of old in the Church of England:—S. Alban, the protomartyr of Britain; Augustine, the apostle

of the English race; Venerable Bede, and King Edward the Confessor. Others must have been chosen for their high station in the earlier ages of the Church,—S. Ambrose, S. Augustine, S. Martin, and S. Cyprian; others from their local celebrity [1]."

This principle enables us also to understand the hatred with which foreign reformers, Puritans, and Presbyterians have always regarded these holydays; and which, so lately as the Revolution, urged them to make a last unsuccessful attempt to have them removed. On the former theory it seems wholly groundless, or the fruit of insane prejudice. For what offence could they find in them, if only retained for the secular reasons I have enumerated? But to their uncatholic and sectarian temper, we may easily understand how distasteful must have been the memories of those saintly persons.

Not to dwell too long on this part of our course, let us trace the history of the Kalendar from the time when it was held in highest honour, and the observance of its holydays was a willing service, downwards through ages of irreverence and change. More grateful labour would it be to follow it from the early years of British faith, as it was increased, century after century, by new examples of British and Catholic holiness. But as our theme is the modern Kalendar, the former course must for the present be adopted.

We read that "in 1332 Mepham Archbishop of Canterbury held a provincial council at Magfield, in which a rubric of the principal holydays was sanctioned and appointed, together with the manner how they ought to be observed. It contains the catalogue of the chief festivals: Nativity of our Saviour (then the year began), S. Stephen, S. John, Innocents, S. Thomas of Canterbury, Circumcision, Epiphany, Purification of Blessed Virgin Mary, S. Matthias, Annunciation of Blessed Virgin Mary, Easter with three following days, S. Mark, SS. Philip and James, Invention of Holy Cross, Ascension of our Lord, SS. Peter and Paul, Translation of S. Thomas of Canterbury, S. Mary Magdalene, S. James, Assumption of Blessed Virgin Mary, S. Laurence, S. Bartholomew, Nativity of Blessed Virgin Mary, Exaltation of Holy Cross,

[1] Vol. lxxi. p. 385.

S. Matthew, S. Michael, S. Luke, SS. Simon and Jude, All Saints, S. Andrew, S. Nicholas, Conception of Blessed Virgin Mary, S. Thomas. To which are added anniversaries of consecration of churches, and of the saints to [God in honour of] whose memory they are dedicated. Upon these festivals people are enjoined to forbear working; to come to Church; to be present at all the parts of the divine service; and joining the public devotions for the benefit of the quick and dead; and in short to spend the time in such a religious manner that both themselves and others may be qualified for the mediation of those saints in honour of whom the festivals are kept. As for the other inferior holydays the people are not forbidden to follow their employments, unless enjoined by their respective ordinaries. S. George's day was ranged under the privilege of the greater holydays, to which we may add that of S. Augustine the monk, which was observed in Saxon times. The number of the great holydays was afterwards increased, as appears by the Constitutions of Archbishop Chicheley, when the festivals of S. David, S. Chad, and S. Winifred are added to the rest [1]."

In this state the Kalendar remained for two centuries, till "about the year 1536 King Henry VIII. set forth his injunctions to retrench the number of holydays. The instrument complains that these festivals were grown so numerous that there was scarce any time to gather in the harvest; that such frequent relaxations brought on a habit of idleness, and were oftentimes abused to intemperance and riot. The injunctions ran in the king's name, with the assent of the prelates and clergy in convocation. The feast of the dedication of churches is ordered to be kept on the first Sunday in October, and on no other day. The feast of the patron of every church, commonly called the *Church Holyday*, is thrown up and laid open to business. All those feasts likewise which fall either in harvest or term-time are discharged, and every man left at liberty to work in them. The feasts of the Apostles, of the Blessed Virgin, and all those festivals in which the judges do not usually sit at Westminster, are excepted.

[1] Collier's Eccl. History, book vi. p. 531.

However all priests and clerks both secular and regular were allowed to perform their accustomed service in their churches, provided they did not do it in a solemn manner, nor enjoin the same duty on others [1]." Otherwise the ancient Kalendar was not changed during the reign of this king, except that the festivals of S. Thomas of Canterbury were erased from it, and the title of the Bishops of Rome commemorated in it was suppressed.

On the accession of King Edward VI. in 1548, the first great change was made, and confirmed by Parliament. It was then reduced to the present *red-letter* days, with the single addition of S. Mary Magdalene, whose festival was also printed in red letters, with a collect, epistle, and gospel. This edition of the Common Prayer-Book was put forth declaring that it had been drawn up "by the aid of the Holy Ghost."

Nevertheless, under the auspices of Martin Bucer, Peter Martyr, and other foreign reformers who had been invited over into England by Cranmer, a very different book of Common Prayer was compiled and sanctioned by Parliament in 1551. So ignorant were these foreign assistants of the English language that they used a Latin translation; and Parliament declared, while it sanctioned the changes, that they proceeded from "curiosity rather than from any worthy cause." In the Kalendar, the festivals of S. Mary Magdalene and S. Barnabas were omitted; and the names of S. George in April, of Lammas and S. Laurence in August, and of S. Clement in November were added in black letters. We also trace the first use of the Kalendar as an almanac, in which are recorded the times when the sun enters the signs of the zodiac, the equinoxes, the beginning and end of the dog-days, and of certain terms.

In 1552 an Act of Parliament was passed appointing certain holydays to be observed. These were Sundays, and the festivals now marked in red letters. It enjoined "that none other day shall be kept holyday, or to abstain from lawful bodily labour." The eves of all feasts were to be kept as vigils, except those of S. John Evangelist, and SS. Philip and James.

[1] Collier's Eccl. History, Part ii. book ii. p. 129.

The feast of S. George was to be observed on the 22nd, 23rd, and 24th of April yearly, by the knights of the right honourable the Order of the Garter, formerly better known as the Knights of S. George. Husbandmen, labourers, and fishermen were allowed to work upon these holydays when necessity required [1].

When Queen Mary ascended the throne the ancient Liturgy and Kalendar were restored to the Church of England on its return to the communion of western Christendom; but only till her premature decease in 1558. In 1559 the second book of K. Edward VI., as it was called, that is, the Common Prayer revised by Bucer and Martyr, was again sanctioned, with a few trifling alterations. The Kalendar remained as it had been in 1551, except that the festivals of S. George and S. Laurence were made red-letter days, and the name of S. Barnabas was restored.

In 1562 proposals were made by the Puritans to have the Common Prayer amended. Among the alterations which they desired were these; that the sign of the Cross in Baptism, the custom of kneeling at the Holy Communion, and the use of organs might be disused; and "that all Sundays and principal feasts of Christ be kept holydays; and all other holydays be abrogated [2]." These reverend observances the Church refused to surrender.

King James I., on his accession to the English throne, was still less inclined than his predecessor to allow any changes for the worse in the Ritual. After the conference at Hampton Court in 1604, important additions were made to the Kalendar. The festival of S. Mary Magdalene was restored in black letters, the days of S. George and S. Laurence were also made lesser holydays, and, except S. Alban and Venerable Bede, all the saints commemorated in the present Kalendar were added to it, together with the vigil-fasts as now observed, with the exception of the vigil of the Annunciation, which was marked in red letters in honour of the beginning of the king's reign. His birthday was also inserted in red letters on the

[1] Collier, Part ii. book iv. p. 321.

[2] Cardwell's History of Conferences, p. 40.

19th June. The Kalendar was still used as an almanac; the hours of sunrise and sunset were prefixed to each month; and the summer and winter solstices were added. The names of the saints stand alone, without any titles of distinction, as Martyr, Confessor, &c.

The Kalendar of the Scottish Prayer-book, appointed by King Charles I. in 1637, contains many more saints, chiefly belonging to Scotland, and one to the Eastern Church,—S. Cyril. A very few of the saints in the English Kalendar are omitted. The birthday of the king was inserted in red letters on the 19th November; and the day of his coronation in black letters on the 18th June. The usual almanac-notices were continued, except the mention of the dog-days; and the 5th November, which had been added by King James, was called "Powder Treason."

On the 18th October, 1633, a declaration was issued by King Charles I., containing this order regarding the holydays: "Out of a like pious care for the service of God, suppressing of any humours that oppose the truth, and for the ease and comfort and recreation of our well-deserving people, we do ratify and publish this our blessed father's declaration; the rather because of late, in some counties of our kingdom, we find that under pretence of taking away abuses there hath been a general forbidding not only of ordinary meetings, but of the feasts of the dedication of churches, commonly called wakes. Now our express will and pleasure is that these feasts with others shall be observed, and that our justices of the peace in their several divisions shall look to it, both that all disorders there may be prevented and punished, and that all neighbourhood and freedom with manlike and lawful exercises be used [1]."

That the people were not unwilling to follow the royal injunction regarding the holydays may be learned from this passage from Stow: "The parish churches in London are honoured with the names of several saints prefixed to them; to [God in honour of] whom, whether holy men or women, they were dedicated at their founding; and so they stand in

[1] Collier's Eccl. Hist. Part ii. book ix. p. 758.

our weekly bills of mortality. The first bill wherein the parishes had the title of *saint* put before each saint's name was that which bore date January 15th, 1634, to the 22nd of the same; which continued for some years until afterwards in the mayoralty of Alderman Pennington the saints were thrown out of doors, and the parishes unsainted. For in the year 1642 the title of *saint* in the weekly bills of mortality in London was commanded by the authority then prevailing to be expunged for the future: the Blessed Virgin Mary, the holy Apostles (nay, and our Saviour himself nor the Holy Trinity spared), whom no Christian dare deny to be saints in heaven, being for company unhallowed and unsainted also. This divorcing of the parishes from their saints in the said bills continued till the year 1660; when at the restoration of King Charles II. they were again restored; and so it hath continued hitherto[1]."

In the days of rebuke and blasphemy which went before and followed the judicial murder of King Charles in 1649, the holydays and other blessed institutions of the Church were openly insulted. On the 8th June, 1647, the festivals and fasts were abolished by a public ordinance, and the second Tuesday in every month was appointed to be kept as a day of recreation instead of the Christian holydays. How nearly do the acts of those Puritan rebels and of the infidel revolutionists in the last century in France resemble each other! These advanced only a step further in impiety, and abolished the Christian Sunday.

The happy restoration of King Charles II. in 1660 put an end to the reign of tyranny; and in the "Savoy Conference" an attempt was made to convince the Puritans and Presbyterians of the propriety of the ecclesiastical order then prevailing. They urged many objections to the Book of Common Prayer and to the discipline of the Church, which were answered by its representatives. They proposed, among other amendments, "that the religious observance of saints' days appointed to be kept as holydays, and the vigils thereof, without any foundation (as we conceive) in Scripture, may be

[1] Survey of London, book v.

omitted; that if any be retained they may be called festivals and not holydays, nor made equal with the Lord's day; nor have any peculiar service appointed for them, nor the people be upon such days forced wholly to abstain from work; and that the names of all others now inserted in the Kalendar which are not in the first and second books of Edward VI. may be left out."

To this it was answered, that "the observation of saints' days is not as of divine but ecclesiastical institution, and therefore, it is not necessary that they should have any other ground in Scripture than all other institutions of the same nature, so that they be agreeable to the Scripture in the general end for the promoting piety. And the observation of them was ancient, as appears by the rituals and liturgies and by the joint consent of antiquity, and by the ancient translation of the Bible, as the Syriac and Ethiopic, where the lessons appointed for holydays are noted and set down; the former of which was made near the apostles' time. Besides, our Saviour himself kept a feast of the Church's institution; viz. the Feast of the Dedication [1]. The choice end of these days being not feasting but the exercise of holy duties, they are fitter called holydays than festivals; and though they be all of like nature, it doth not follow that they are equal. The people may be dispensed with for their work after the service, as authority pleaseth. The other names are left in the Kalendar, not that they should be so kept holydays, but they are useful for the preservation of their memories, and for other reasons, as for leases, law-days, &c. [2]"

After the conference, which failed in its desired end, further changes were made in the Book of Common Prayer and the Kalendar. These were ratified by Convocation in December, 1661, and by Parliament in March following. The Kalendar of 1604 was retained, the names of S. Alban and Venerable Bede being added to it; the observance of the Ember-days and the three Rogation-days was enjoined; and the late events of the English history were commemorated on the

[1] S. John x. 22.
[2] Cardwell, pp. 306 and 340.

30th January and 29th May. And the Common Prayer was finally adjusted as it now is. It is remarkable how carefully all traces of an almanac are removed from the Kalendar, how reverently the names of the saints are expressed, with a notice of their country or see. The title of Martyr, Archbishop, Bishop, Priest, Virgin, Confessor, Deacon, or Doctor is added to each; and to the name of our Ladye the honourable title of the Blessed Virgin is prefixed. Among the clergy who assisted at this revisal were Cosins, bishop of Durham; Sanderson, bishop of Lincoln; Pearson and Sparrow, afterwards bishops of Chester and Norwich; and Thorndike, prebendary of Westminster.

In 1689 a last effort was made by the descendants of the Puritan party to remove from the Kalendar the lesser holydays, with many other causes of complaint. A commission was appointed to prepare a list of grievances and proposed alterations to be laid before Convocation. This was sanctioned and indeed partly prepared by Tillotson and his friends; but it was so resolutely opposed by Patrick and the high party, as it may be called, that all intention of change was finally abandoned. The proposed alteration regarding the holydays was thus expressed: "That the apocryphal lessons, and those of the Old Testament which are too natural be thrown out, and others appointed in their stead by a new Kalendar, which is already fully settled, and out of which are omitted all the legendary saints' days and others not directly referred to in the same book." Hence we may gather that these saints' days were not then as now wholly forgotten. They were one of the grievances which the Puritans complained of; and the Church refused to indulge their humour by removing it. What was the general tone of feeling, regarding the institutions of the Church, among that party, let a candid observer judge from some of the other proposals. As for example, "that the chaunting of the Divine Service in Cathedral Churches shall be laid aside; that if any refuse to receive the sacrament of the Lord's Supper kneeling, it may be administered to them in their pews; that the rubric which obliges ministers to read or hear common prayer publicly or privately every day be changed to an exhortation to the people

to frequent those prayers; and that the Absolution in morning and evening prayer may be read by a deacon; the word 'priest' in the rubric being changed into 'minister,' and the word 'remission' be put out as not very intelligible [1]."

Are those who, with the Puritans, are inclined to be offended with the lesser holydays in the Kalendar, or perchance to pass them over in silent contempt, also prepared with them to condemn the solemn harmony of cathedral choirs, or the lowly attitude of forgiven penitents at the altar of grace, the daily praises which the Christian priest is bound to offer, or the blessing of peace deep and unutterable which flows into the wounded heart from the words of absolution? Are they with them prepared to say, what one almost fears to repeat, that "remission of sins" is not very intelligible?

In spite of Puritan prejudice, the names of these saints, and of many others not in the present Kalendar, continued to be published yearly in the almanacs till the change of style in 1752, when for some unknown reason the practice ceased [2].

How many changes have we beheld in our course since the fourteenth century, when the Council of Magfield enacted pious laws for the due honouring of the saints. Yet throughout all these changes one principle seems to prevail; the nearer any age approached in feeling and in creed to the standard of Catholic antiquity, the greater reverence did it pay to the memory of the saints. The Church of England was defrauded of nearly all of them by Cranmer and his foreign assistants; then Puritans prevented their restoration under the reign of Elizabeth. When men such as bishop Andrews were in favour the partial restoration of the Kalendar in 1604 was not surprising; nor that the rebels and fanatics in his son's reign should sweep away every trace of ancient devotion. And under the care of such guardians as Sparrow and Cosins and Pearson and Thorndike the Kalendar recovered more than it had lost since the days of King James I. The Puritans and Presbyterians still cherished the design of effacing from the English Church every remaining trace of

[1] Cardwell, pp. 412 and 432.
[2] Quarterly Review, Vol. lxxi. p. 386.

her Catholic origin, and when her best sons were driven from her communion at the Revolution, they renewed their importunity that "the legendary saints' days should be omitted." Again she refused to purchase their obedience by such a sacrifice. Is it possible to believe that in those times at least the saints' days served no religious purpose? or that they were preserved, notwithstanding so many attempts to remove them, for no weightier reasons than those which Mr. Wheatley gives? The Church of England has declared the preservation of the memories of the saints to be one reason for retaining them in the Kalendar; and she has shown how highly she valued them in past times. Will her children now suffer these holy commemorations to be lost through neglect which their forefathers at great sacrifice secured for them? Will they continue to follow the example of Puritans and Protestants rather than of the holy Church throughout the world, and of the men of Catholic minds in their own? Oh, that the golden tongue of a Chrysostom or the mellifluous eloquence of a Bernard could be heard in these days to win Christians back to their duty and their high privilege! But "when iniquity shall abound the love of many shall wax cold." And truly if the contemplation of the gentle and holy persons whom we find in the Kalendar does not move us, the tongue of an angel would be heard in vain. "Only reflect what men they were," says the author of *Morus*, "spirits so high above the world, dead to every selfish and sinful thought; possessed of such perfect devotion of mind and heart to the eternal world." Behold the youthful virgins and martyrs, SS. Agnes and Margaret and Agatha; the blessed Magdalene whose love to the Lord was great, because she had much forgiven; S. Hilary and S. Ambrose the champions of the faith against the Arians; S. Alban the protomartyr of England; and S. Augustin and S. Benedict, and S. David! Behold also S. Gregory the Great and S. Augustin of Canterbury the Apostles of England; the Venerable Bede, the light of the Anglo-Saxon Church; and S. Edward the Confessor! Isolated as has been the position of the Anglican Church for three centuries, there is still in the Kalendar a bond of union with the Catholic Church which may one day be renewed as

it was of old. The Eastern, African, Spanish, Roman, and Gallican Churches are all represented in it, and as we turn from one venerable name to another we are carried from century to century, from land to land, yet in all is displayed the same unity of faith, the same holy life, the same blessed death. Thus even in its present imperfect state does the Kalendar become to us an epitome of the Catholic Church, the communion of saints.

It is a fact full of significance that the Anglo-American Church, which has effaced these names from her Kalendar, has also refused a place in her offices to the creed of S. Athanasius. The dutiful sons of a Church which retains that glorious confession cannot refuse to think that a Church which rejects it has lost much that is valuable; so also must they believe that by ceasing to preserve the memories of the saints she has forfeited one bond of union with the past glories of Christendom.

"But what is our praise to the saints," says S. Bernard, "what our exaltation; to what profit is this our annual solemnity? What good shall our poor earthly honours or our praises do to them, whom as the Son faithfully promised, their heavenly Father honours? They already overflow. And even so it is, dearly beloved; the saints need not our honours, nor can our reverence add anything to them. But it is for our own advantage and not for theirs that we celebrate their blessed memories. Would you know how it is for our good? By this remembrance of them I confess that I feel a vehement desire enkindled of enjoying their blessed society, and of one day being worthy to be a fellow-citizen and inhabitant with the blessed spirits, of consorting with the company of Patriarchs, with the fellowship of Prophets, with the senate of Apostles, with the countless armies of Martyrs, with the college of Confessors, and with the choirs of Virgins; of being at length gathered and rejoicing in the Communion of Saints."

And here I might say much in defence of the miraculous histories which attested the favour that the saints had attained with God. But this is a book of meditation rather than of controversy, and to these themes it invites only the lovers of

contemplation and not of keen debate. Those who are desirous of reading a defence of the Catholic belief regarding miracles may find it in an *Essay on the Miracles of the Early Ages*, by the Rev. Mr. Newman: and in a shorter form in the *Church of the Fathers*, chap. iii. That such events did not seem incredible to the Church for fifteen centuries is capable of abundant proof; nor in later times to the authors of the English Homilies, we may learn from the account of S. Epiphanius, contained in that against *Peril of Idolatry*, "who, as Jerome saith, was of so great veneration and estimation that Valens the emperor, who was a great persecutor, did not once touch him. For heretics being princes thought it their shame if they should persecute such a notable man. And in the Tripartite Ecclesiastical History, the ninth book, and forty-eighth chapter, it is testified, that Epiphanius being yet alive did work miracles, and that after his death devils being expelled at his tomb did roar [1]."

And lest the frequent mention of the relics of the martyrs may seem strange to some, let me cite the opinion of Thorndike an Anglican doctor in the seventeenth century: "We believe that we are most sincerely to honour the corpses of the saints, especially the relics of the martyrs: if any man do against this sentence he is no Christian, but a follower of Eunomius and Vigilantius." And again, "Reverence in preserving the remains of their bodies and burying them, celebrating the remembrance of their agonies every year, assembling themselves at their monuments, making the days of their death festivals, burying their remains under the stones upon which the eucharist was celebrated,—What was all this but Christianity?"

Archbishop Bramhall also says, "Abundant love and duty doth extend an honourable respect from the person of a dear friend or noble benefactor, to his posterity, to his memory, to his monument, to his image, to his relics, to every thing that he loved, even to the earth which he did tread upon, for his sake."

[1] Homily on Peril of Idolatry. Second Part, p. 173. ed. Oxford, 1840.

S. Jerome also testifies, in his epistle to Vigilantius, what was the Catholic belief in his day: "That Roman bishop forsooth does ill who above the bones of those dead men Peter and Paul, according to us most venerable, but as you say only a little vile dust, offers sacrifice to the Lord, and deems that their tombs are altars of Christ. And not only in one city, but the bishops of the whole world grievously err, who, in despite of Vigilantius, enter the cemeteries of the dead, in which a little vile dust, and I know not whose ashes lie wrapped in linen, polluting all things forsooth that come near them, like the sepulchres of the pharisees, which are fair outside, but within, according to you, are defiled with every uncleanness."

And if to any gentle hearts it may seem a needless minuteness to describe at length the agonies of the martyrs, and the various paths by which they passed to their crowns, let them reflect that the sufferings which the soldiers of Christ were content to endure, we who follow in the same Christian chivalry may not refuse to hear of. For thus we are taught the reality of their faith, and of the enemies over whom the love of Christ could bear them more than conquerors. We are also taught to think of the martyrs and confessors less as dim historical abstractions, and more as real persons who had, like us, their time of trial, and who having overcome have followed the Captain of their salvation into His glory. "Why need I mention all the instruments of tyrannical cruelty," says Bona; "the cords, and the fetters, the wooden collars, the manacles, the clubs, and the chains; the scourges, the rods, and the whips; the pans, the brazen bulls, the gridirons, the caldrons, and the burning helmets; the darts, the sword, the exile, the prison, and even the death itself, which alone seems gentle among so many torments? Why need I speak of the prolonged and unbloody martyrdom of the holy confessors, and of all those who pleased God, their straits, and afflictions, and watchings, and fastings, and silence, and nakedness, and innumerable tribulations? The thought of these may well shake off all torpor from our souls, and may act as powerful stimulants to holiness. For what shall we say, exclaims the holy Ephrem, in that awful

day of the last judgment, when the blessed martyrs of Christ standing by the throne of glory shall show us the scars of their wounds and cruel tortures and stripes shining on their bodies? What shall we then have to show, beloved brethren? What virtues shall we produce? Charity towards God and our neighbour? a whole and inviolable faith? voluntary poverty and emptiness of all earthly things? peace and calm? alms? the spirit of pity and of kindness? pure prayers and healthful sorrow? watchings, tears, and true penitence? Happy and blessed shall he be whom such graces shall then attend. Then shall he associate with the choirs of saints who has followed their footsteps. Then they who have shared their sufferings shall also share their reward and their crown. For the martyrs ascended to the gates of the heavenly palace by the steps of suffering, and mounted upwards from the rack and the dungeon [1]."

But further, the spirit of prophecy has foretold that "the day of the Lord shall not come except there be a falling away first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition . . . whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming." And to the time of the last Antichrist a traditional interpretation in the Church has applied this Scripture, "there shall be great tribulation, such as was not from the beginning of the world, and except those days were shortened no flesh should be saved, but for the elects' sake the days shall be shortened." Three years and a half are described in the vision of the prophet as the limit of his reign. The coming of the Lord will be sudden, and may be even at the door, and none can tell whether he may not be called to endure the conflict which shall be the harbinger of His approach. Great need is there then that the hearts of Christians should be nerved for the trial which may await them. And if they may themselves have to pass through a more terrible ordeal than the Church has ever known, the histories of the fiery baptism of the martyrs should be as the sound of the trumpet calling the steel-

[1] Divina Psalmodia.

clad warrior to the field of honour. Brief and sharp will be the agony, but the crown of glory how unfading! How think you shall our bodies endure the fire and the sword, if we turn away in fear and with fastidious shrinking from the very mention of them? Doubtless a chosen band will be prepared by the Lord to do Him honour in that day; shall we then tamely surrender our baptismal birthright to be enrolled in its honourable ranks? Let us rather desire to enter more into "the fellowship of Christ's sufferings," that when the hour of trial comes we may by God's grace not be found wanting.

But to the Militant Church it is not given to know the gladness of festival days unvaried by the mournful note of penitential rite. Such everlasting joy may not be attained till the day dawn of which Bona writes that it has no hours and no darkness, for the brightness of God shineth upon it. And therefore besides the feasts and holydays of the Kalendar there are also days of fasting and abstinence from lawful pleasures. These are the forty days of Lent, the Vigils of certain festivals, the four Ember seasons, the three days of Rogations before the Ascension, and all Fridays in the year except Christmas-day.

"The very purpose of the Church of God both in the number and in the order of her fasts," says Hooker, "hath been not only to preserve thereby throughout all ages the remembrance of miseries heretofore sustained, and of the causes in ourselves out of which they have arisen, that men considering the one might fear the other the more, but further also to temper the mind lest contrary affections coming in place should make it too profuse and dissolute; in which respect it seemeth that fasts have been set as ushers of festival-days for prevention of those disorders as much as might be, wherein notwithstanding the world always will deserve, as it hath done, blame, because such evils being not possible to be rooted out, the most we can do is in keeping them low; and to create in the minds of men a love towards frugal and severe life, to undermine the palaces of wantonness, to plant parsimony as nature where riotousness hath been study, to harden whom pleasure would melt, and to help the humours which always

fulness breedeth; that children as it were in the wool of their infancy dyed with hardness may never afterwards change colour; that the poor whose perpetual fasts are necessity, may with better contentment endure the hunger which virtue causeth others so often to choose and by advice of religion itself so far to esteem above the contrary; that they which for the most part do lead sensual and easy lives, they which as the prophet David describeth them, 'are not plagued like other men,' may by the public spectacle of all be still put in mind what themselves are: finally that every man may be every man's daily guide and example as well by fasting to declare humility, as by praise to express joy in the sight of God; although it have herein befallen the Church as sometimes David, so that the speech of the one may be truly the voice of the other, 'My soul fasted, and even that was turned to my reproof[1].'" Let this suffice to show the end which the fast-days serve when they are kept as the Church enjoins. A more detailed account of them will occupy us in a future part of our course.

Changeful as is the alternation of fast and festival in the sacred year, it is not more so than the joy and sorrow which attend the footsteps of all who walk in the path of the just; which indeed it may be thought to shadow forth in a lively manner. The soul of each Christian pilgrim has its night of weeping and its festal morning oft succeeding; from the joys of Easter it often passes with the Church to the sadness and loneliness of Lent. And in this view also is the order of the Kalendar full of comfort and instruction.

But while we linger, behold the solemn train of the just made perfect whose heavenward path we are now to contemplate! "My eye," says S. Bernard, "is my thoughts, and to think of the saints is in a manner to see them." For a little space they are visible to mortal sight, and then disappear whither the eye cannot follow them: "Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him." And when the Lord went up into heaven a cloud received Him out of the sight of His apostles. Tongue of mortal man may not presume

[1] Eccl. Polity, book v. chap. lxxv, § 18.

to describe that company. Even the divine John, when asked by the angel, What are these that are arrayed in white robes and whence came they? answered, Sir, thou knowest. One is there wearing our nature, the eternal Son of God, Incarnate, the First-born among many brethren. Around Him is a multitude whom no man can number, who with Him have come out of great tribulation, and are made perfect through suffering. First of these and most honoured is His Virgin-Mother the ever-blessed Mary. What holiness, what humility, what divine charity, what thirst for justice, now appeased! Alas! how shall one covered with the garment of impurity have fellowship with these? Such as we are were they once, but they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Truly in no words so befitting can our admiration find utterance as in those of S. Paul, "O Altitudo, O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!" Who that beholds these celestial pilgrims can forbear to follow, albeit afar off; so winning is the grace that is shed around their path? As they pass upwards into the light of the perfect day, they draw us by an irresistible constraint towards the city of God whither their steps are bent. With earnest intercession also they plead with God to gather us into His kingdom.

"That Church of ancient ones," says the holy Abbat of Clairvaulx, "waits for us, and we are careless; the saints long for us, and we trifle; the just expect us, and we are unconcerned. Let us bestir ourselves, brethren; let us rise with Christ, let us seek those things which are above, let us have a relish for them. Let us long for those who long for us; let us hasten to those who wait for us; and let us with the desires of our souls anticipate our union with those who are expecting us. For here in our communion below, there is no security, no perfection, no rest; and yet even here how good and pleasant is it brethren to dwell together in unity! Whatever ill befals us, from within or from without, how much more easily is it borne when shared with this consort of dear brethren who with us have one heart and one soul towards God! How much more precious then, and more joyous, how

much more blessed will be that union where there can be no suspicion, no chance of disunion, where perfect charity shall bind all in indissoluble harmony: where, as the Father and the Son are One, we shall be one in Them!"

To the followers of the just made perfect I commend this humble record of the faith and patience of some among them, in the words of the author of the *English Martyrologe*: "I do not heere offer unto yow any new thing, but that which, so many ages since, hath, by a certaine inheritance as it were of your forfathers, descended still, by good right and title unto yow, and shall heerafter unto your and all posterity. Only this that I have heere gathered togeather and restored unto yow againe, that which the injury of tymes had violently taken from yow, and sought to abolish all memory thereof: humbly presenting the same as a duty of my love towards yow and my dearest countrey. Wishing yow to take in good part what my poore endeavours have byn able to produce heerin for your spirituall consolation; with desyre to be made partaker of your good prayers[1]."

On, step by step, they tread their way with fear
And downbent looks; and as they onward pass
Grief's penitential robes they seem to wear;
Eyeing herself within a silent glass
Faith calmly moves, and from the worldly mass
Parts more and more, where Virtue's palmy rod
Points out the way; and like the withering grass
The things of earth beneath her feet are trod,
While on their narrow way they upward walk with God.

Then light increases to the perfect day;
The world doth know them not and cannot know,
Nor understand their ways, nor see the ray
That comes from Heaven to light them, while they go
From strength to strength; along this vale of woe
A rainbow sprung from the Baptismal well
Surrounds them, raining freshness o'er their brow;

[1] *The English Martyrologe*, by a Catholic Priest. 1608. No place of publication mentioned. Preface signed J. W.

And angels while they know not round them dwell,
Whence in their presence seems some Heaven-constraining
spell.

Lo, one by one they pass, and are no more,
Walking in awful stillness into light
Too pure for mortal wisdom to explore:
So solemnly and still they pass from sight;—
Still as the minute-watches of the night,
Or trees that by the streams of life appear,
Waiting their change: O vision all too bright
For sinful man, who still must walk in fear,
Till death remove the veil, and make the vision clear.

Baptistery, p. iv.

# Part First.

DECEMBER—MAY.

# Justorum Semita.

DECEMBER 6.

## S. Nicolas, Bishop.

342.

S. Nicolas bishop of Myra, the capital of Lycia in Lesser Asia, was born at Patara, a town in the same province, about three miles distant from the capital. He early devoted himself to God in the religious life, and was appointed abbat of the monastery of the Holy Zion by the bishop of Myra, his predecessor, who had founded it. There he lived in seclusion, till he was chosen to fill the vacant see of Myra. In this high office he became famous for his great piety and zeal; which, as ancient writers testify, were honoured by God with frequent miracles. Instances of his charity are recorded, in which he bound those who were indebted to him by a solemn promise not to reveal his name till after his decease. The Greek historians of his life say that he was imprisoned for the faith, and that he witnessed a good confession for Christ in the end of the persecution under Dioclesian. They say also that he was present at the council of Nicæa. But the silence of other authors, particu-

larly of those who have written the history of the council, and have recorded the names of the fathers who composed it, makes this supposition extremely doubtful. The nearness of Myra to Nicæa is the strongest reason, and indeed the only one, that can be alleged in its support.

He died in the year 342, at Myra, and was buried in his cathedral. Many churches were built in his honour; among others, one by the Emperor Justinian, in the sixth age, at Blaquernæ, near Constantinople; and in that city alone there were three churches called by his name. In the year 1087 his remains were brought from Myra to Bari, on the coast of the Adriatic, by some merchants of that town. They used force to obtain them from the monks who guarded the church where the saint lay; and they were chased on board of their ships by the inhabitants, who attempted in vain to prevent the sacrilegious act. The excuse which was pleaded in its defence was, that the precious relics were thus saved from the indignities which would have been offered to them if they had fallen into the hands of the Mahometans. They were translated to Bari on the 9th of May, 1087, and were deposited with great ceremony in the church of S. Stephen, by the bishop. That day was ever afterwards kept as a festival in honour of the event. Crowds of pilgrims resorted to the church, to witness the wonderful miracles which God was pleased to work at the tomb of his saint. S. Nicolas is generally represented in his pontifical attire, giving the benediction; and near him is a cauldron containing several children. This alludes to his having miraculously delivered some

Christian children who had been condemned to that cruel death by the Pagans.

S. Nicolas has ever been considered the patron of children. The reason of this is given in simple language in the *Book of Festivals*: "It is said that his fader hyght Epiphanius, and his moder Joanna, when he was born, made him Christen, and called him Nycolas, that is a manne's name; but he kepeth the name of a child, for he chose to kepe vertues, mekenes, and simplenes, and without malice. Thus he lyved all his lyfe in vertues with his childe's name. And therefore children do him worship before all other saints."

Hence arose the ancient custom, among the children of cathedral and collegiate churches and schools, of celebrating his feast with many curious ceremonies. On S. Nicolas' day one of the choristers was annually chosen by his companions to preside over them, with the name and dignity of a bishop; and his office lasted till the Feast of the Innocents. He was arrayed in the pontifical vestments, and could sing any part of the Divine Office except the Mass. On the Feast of the Innocents there was a grand procession, in which the usual order was reversed, and the canons of the church performed the duties of the children, while the choristers and their child-bishop had the place of dignity assigned to them. The reason of this is given in a sermon delivered by a boy-bishop in Gloucester cathedral. His text was S. Matth. xviii. 3. "Thus much have I said of the virtue of innocency for the honour of those blessed Innocents who are remembered in the Church this day; which day, as it is commonly

termed Childermas-day, so it is celebrated and solemnized by the preferment of children in all great cathedral churches; which give the child this day the prerogative above men, in token that they took place of men for their martyrdom in the cause of the blessed child Jesus [1]."

When the child-bishop died during the term of his office, he was buried with the honour due to his temporary rank, and in his pontifical attire, as all the bishops of the Church then were. In the cathedral of Salisbury there is at this day a monument of a child-bishop, representing the effigy of a boy episcopally arrayed, and in the act of giving the blessing. This custom is said to have been in England since the fourteenth century; but it was known in foreign countries before that time. It was abolished by King Henry VIII. in 1542; and was restored by Queen Mary in 1554. At her death it was again put down, and has never been revived. Among other principal churches and colleges where it was celebrated in England were York, St. Paul's in London, Beverley, Winchester, Eton, Gloucester, Rotherham, and Salisbury. Strype says almost every parish had its child-bishop. It was known also in France, Germany, Switzerland, and Spain. In the inventories of the ornaments and plate of several churches are enumerated mitres and rings of great richness and beauty, "for the use of the child-bishop." Some antiquarians connect the ancient plays called *Moralities*, and the Mummings of the Feast of Fools and the Abbat of Misrule, with the ceremonies of the chorister-bishop, but without very good reason. The modern "Eton

[1] Malcolm's *Londinium Redivivum*.

Montem" is also said to be another form of the same singular custom.

Mourning mothers, weep no more!
Weep no more your pledges torn;
Little troop in endless morn,
They attend the Virgin-born.

Virgin-born whom we adore,
Father, Spirit, One, and Three,
Sing we glory unto Thee,
Sing we everlastingly.

Hymns from the Parisian Breviary, p. 74.

---

DECEMBER 8.

## Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

WITH how little honour are British Christians wont to regard the blessed Virgin Mary; how seldom is her name on their lips, or the memory of her spotless holiness set before them for imitation! They forget that the Holy Virgin was declared, by the spirit of prophecy, Blessed to all generations; and they refuse to think of her, as she truly is, the most exalted of all creatures, and brought into a nearer relation to Almighty God than any other of the children of men. This feast leads us to meditate upon her wonderful history. Let us do so reverently, and with deep love!

The Catholic Church has ever carefully distinguished between articles of faith, on which she has pronounced an authoritative decision, and those opinions which she permits her sons to hold privately without condemning any who differ from them. The former are found in the creeds of the Church; while the latter are considered merely as matters of pious belief, which the conscience of every

one is at liberty to receive or to reject without being guilty of a breach of the unity of the holy faith. And such a pious belief is the mystery of this day,—the Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Some have understood it to signify, that from the moment of her conception, holy Mary was perfectly free from original and all other sin; while perhaps a greater number have maintained that this was true only from the time of her birth into the world. Durandus, who held the latter opinion, thus distinguishes between them: "Among all saints the glorious Mary, mother of God, and ever a virgin, holds the first place; and the Church at four seasons of the year celebrates four solemn feasts in her honour. Some add a fifth; namely, the Conception of the Blessed Virgin; saying, that as we celebrate the death of the saints, not for the sake of their death, but because they were then received into eternal joys; so we may commemorate the Feast of the Conception, not because the Blessed Virgin was conceived —for she was conceived in sin—but because the mother of the Lord was conceived. Nevertheless, though she was conceived in sin, yet that original sin was taken away from her when she was sanctified in the womb, as were Jeremias and S. John Baptist. Wherefore the nativity of the holy Virgin and S. John Baptist are deservedly celebrated. Their nativity, I say, *from* the womb, when they came into the light of this world; not their nativity *in* the womb, when their souls and bodies were united, which is not celebrated, for the reason I have before given [1]."

"For the honour of our Lord," says S. Augus-

[1] Durandus, Ration. Div. Off. lib. vii. c. 7.

tine, "I will have no question regarding the holy Virgin Mary, when we hereafter discourse of sins. For that to her was the greater grace given wholly to conquer sin we learn from this, that she was found worthy to conceive and to bear Him who, as all allow, had no sin[1]."

"Although," says S. Anselm, "the Son of God was born of a most pure Virgin, yet this was not so by an absolute necessity, as if a holy offspring could not possibly have sprung from a sinful mother in so miraculous a generation; but because it was fitting that the Divine Man should be born of a most pure mother. It was fitting truly, that in such purity, as there is none greater except in God, that Virgin should shine, to whom God the Father had determined to give His only Son, equal to Himself, and loved by Him as Himself; to whom God had so determined to give His Son, that He might, in the same natural and indivisible person, be the Son of God the Father and of the Virgin; whom the Son had chosen to make substantially a mother to Himself; and of whom the Holy Ghost was willing, and would Himself bring it to pass, that He should be conceived and born from Whom He had Himself proceeded[2]."

S. Bernard, in his letter to the canons of Lyons, thus contrasts the belief of the immaculate conception of the Virgin with the opinion of her having been preserved perfectly sinless from her birth:—"I think that a more abundant blessing of holiness descended upon her, which not only sanctified her birth, but also preserved her henceforward safe from

[1] De Naturâ et Gratiâ. [2] De Concep. Virg. c. 18.

all sin; a gift which is not believed to have been given to any other born of women. It was indeed becoming that the Queen of virgins, by the privilege of singular sanctity, should lead a life free from all sin, since she was to be the mother of Him Who destroyed sin and death, and thus bestowed the gift of life and righteousness on all. Holy then was her birth, because the Infinite Holiness Who sprung from her womb made it holy. What then can be added to these honours? Let her conception, say they, also be honoured, which went before her birth; for if it had not gone before it, that which we honour would not have been. But what if another for the same reason should claim this honour for both of her parents? For her ancestors also the same might be claimed with as good reason; and it would be continued to infinity, and the number of feasts would become countless." And again; "We may therefore believe that after her conception, and while she was yet unborn, she received her sanctification; which, by removing all sin, made her birth holy, though not her conception. Therefore, to the few among the children of men to whom it has been granted to be born in holiness was it not given to be so conceived; that for One might be reserved the prerogative of a holy conception, Who should sanctify all; He alone coming without sin to make us clean from all sin. For Jesus alone was conceived by the Holy Ghost; and therefore He alone was holy before His conception[1]."

These passages show that though S. Bernard did not believe the immaculate conception, yet he doubt-

[1] Ep. ad Can. Lugd. 174.

ed not the truth of the holy birth of the Blessed Virgin. And any one who did believe it would answer him by saying, that with God all things are possible. But indeed the whole letter is directed as much against the institution of a new feast in honour of the Immaculate Conception, as against the belief itself. His objections chiefly rest on the silence of the highest ecclesiastical authority regarding it. But even since the Latin Church appointed a festival in its honour, which was not till after S. Bernard's time, the services in which it is annually celebrated have not defined the opinion which the faithful must necessarily hold regarding it. Thus the collect in the office of this day in the modern Parisian Breviary is framed in a general way: "O God, who for the honour of our Lord Jesus Christ didst preserve His Blessed Mother the Virgin Mary from every stain of sin, grant we beseech Thee, that we, honouring her most pure conception, may by Thy grace be made clean from all sin, through the same." And the collects in the Roman and Sarum offices are still more general.

Churchmen who may feel it strange to hear so much made of the Blessed Mary and her history, will do well to remember, that if a mysterious virtue could go out of the very hem of the Lord's robe, and so purifying as to heal the infirmity of her who drew near to Him in faith, how much more mysterious an influence may have passed upon her of whose substance He condescended to be made man, inasmuch as she was permitted to approach nearer to His Divinity than any other creature. And in what deep love and humility she received Him let her words to

the angel at the Annunciation, and the deeds of her life, testify. All the honour that we can pay to her can add nothing to the dignity of the title of reverence by which the whole Church salutes her,—*Mother of God.* And all redounds to the glory and exaltation of her Divine Son. If she was preserved from all stain of sin, it was no less by an act of His grace, than if she had been cleansed from it as Christians ordinarily are. As a daughter of Eve she was by nature inclined to sin, if His good Spirit had not made her perfectly holy, and preserved her so[1].

And is it unreasonable to believe that she was indeed so miraculously kept from the stain of sin, when we reflect how carefully, if I may so say, God provided for the building of His temple at Jerusalem; how jealous He was lest any thing impure should come near it; and how He refused even the holy David, "the man after His own heart," when he would have assisted, because he was stained with the blood shed in just wars? And when it was built, what purifications and consecrating ceremonies did He command, in honour of the place where His glory should appear. But if I may reverently compare with that temple of stone the more precious temple of the Lord's body, where His Divinity is eternally enshrined, how much greater purity may He have required in her who was admitted to be the only fellow-worker with Himself. And not finding that purity in her naturally, may He not have bestowed it upon her by doing that for her which He does not for any other, because none other has been admitted to the same nearness to Himself?

And those who cannot receive the higher mystery

[1] See Wordsworth's Eccl. Sonnets, part ii. xxi.

which this day commemorates, may yet in the feast of the Conception of the Blessed Virgin, celebrate the joyful dawning of the bright day of mercy, which had its full consummation in the life of her Divine Son.

A bishop of Nicomedia, writing in the seventh century, mentions this feast as of ancient date in the Eastern Church; but its observance was not enforced in it till the middle of the twelfth century. It seems not to have become universal in the Western Church till the fifteenth century. It is supposed by some to have been introduced into Britain by S. Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, about the year 1150; but this is very doubtful. It was observed in England in ancient days with singular devotion. And its place in the modern kalendar is a proof that it must have retained a strong hold on the pious affections of the English; for among the many festivals which were finally abolished in the seventeenth century, some of which are of less doubtful origin, it is remarkable that neither the feast of the Conception nor of the Nativity of the Blessed Mary was included. They both stand in the kalendar at this day, silent witnesses against the cold indifference of modern churchmen to the honour of one whom God was graciously pleased to honour. "How worthily is she honoured of men," says bishop Hall, "whom the angel proclaimed beloved of God! O Blessed Mary! he cannot bless thee, he cannot honour thee too much, that deifies thee not. That which the angel said of thee thou hast prophesied of thyself; we believe the angel and thee. All generations shall call thee Blessed, by the Fruit of whose womb all generations are blessed."

As the sun o'er misty shrouds,
When he walks upon the clouds;
Or as when the moon doth rise,
And refreshes all the skies;
Or as when the lily flower
Stands amid the vernal bower;
Or the water's glassy face
Doth reflect the starry space;
Thus above all mothers shone
The mother of the Blessed One.

Hymns from the Parisian Breviary, p. 173.

---

DECEMBER 13.

## S. Lucy, Virgin and Martyr.

304.

S. Lucy was the daughter of a noble and wealthy family in Syracuse, in the island of Sicily. Her father died during her infancy; and she was brought up in the faith of Christ by her mother, Eutychia. While she was still very young, S. Lucy, without the knowledge of her mother, dedicated herself to Christ by a vow of perpetual celibacy. Accordingly, when she was asked in marriage by a noble pagan youth of Syracuse, Eutychia seems to have used her influence with her daughter in his favour; though this must be considered strange conduct in a Christian mother. S. Lucy succeeded in evading his suit for a time, without revealing her private vow. Her mother soon after was afflicted with a grievous malady, and was persuaded by her daughter to visit Catana, where the remains of the virgin martyr S. Agatha were buried. They offered up their

prayers at her tomb; and God was pleased to grant them a gracious answer by restoring Eutychia to health. S. Lucy then told her mother of the vow she had taken, who, out of gratitude to God for his mercy to herself, did not oppose her daughter's pious resolution. On their return home to Syracuse, the holy virgin sold her jewels and goods for the use of the poor, and began openly to profess her solemn dedication to Christ. When the young nobleman who had asked her in marriage heard this, his love was changed into hatred, and he immediately accused her, before the governor Paschasius, of being a Christian. The persecution under Dioclesian and Maximin was then raging with great fury. When S. Lucy was called before the tribunal of the governor, she was exhorted and entreated to deny Christ; and when all arguments had failed, was condemned to be exposed to public infamy; but God in a marvellous way interfered for her protection. Paschasius was furious at being thus foiled by a weak woman, and gave orders that she should be tortured by fire. But while her body was torn with red-hot pincers, the soul of the martyr still maintained her invincible constancy; and the strength of her Lord triumphed in her weakness. She was remanded to prison, where she soon after yielded up her spirit, about the year 304. Her body remained at Syracuse for many years; and was afterwards carried to Italy, and thence to Metz, by command of the Emperor, Otho I. It is there exposed to veneration in the church of S. Vincent. Some of her relics were carried to Constantinople, and afterwards to Venice. She is sometimes represented with her

eyeballs in a dish: this may have been part of her torture, but it is not mentioned in the Acts of her martyrdom.

Fear no more for the torturer's hand,
  Nor the dungeon dark that bound thee;
The choirs of heaven about thee stand,
  Bright shining homes surround thee.

Fear no more for the clanking chain,
  Thou art free as light of heaven;
The stripes that marked thy frame with pain
  For rays of thy crown are given.

Hymns from the Parisian Breviary, p. 285.

---

## DECEMBER 16.

## O Sapientia.

THIS Holyday was so named from two words in the beginning of the first of the *Greater Antiphons*, as they are called, which are sung at the *Magnificat* at vespers, in the churches of the Roman Obedience. Their number varies from seven to twelve. The Roman breviary has seven; the modern Parisian, nine; and the old English Church, before the reign of Edward VI., had eight in her office. As the last is always sung on the 23rd December, the day on which they are begun must depend on their number. Thus the Roman practice is to sing *O Sapientia* on the 17th; the Parisian, on the 15th December. And the English Church still retains the name in her kalendar on the 16th December, the day when it was sung in England in ancient times.

The words of this antiphon are, "*O Sapientia, quæ ex ore Altissimi prodiisti, attingens a fine usque*

*ad finem fortiter, suaviterque disponens omnia: veni ad docendum nos viam prudentiæ.*" "O Wisdom, who comest out of the mouth of the Most High, reaching from one end to another mightily, and sweetly ordering all things, come and teach us the way of understanding[1]."

It was customary in monasteries to hold an annual festival on one of those days on which the *Greater Antiphons* were sung, which was shortly called the "O;" antedating, as it were, the joy of Christmas. This practice may still be traced in modern English colleges. Davies of Kidwelly[2] says, "Within the *Common House* did the master thereof (who was an official of the convent) keep his *O Sapientia* once in the year; viz. between Martinmas and Christmas; a solemn banquet, that the prior and convent did use at that time of the year only; consisting of figs and raisins, with ale and cakes; and thereof no superfluity or excess, but a scholastical and moderate congratulation among themselves."

In the old statutes of the cathedral church of S. Paul in London, in the time of Ralph de Diceto the Dean[3], there is a chapter, *De faciendo "O."* "Also the new residentiary must sing his "*O.*" against the Nativity, and after complin he shall invite the whole choir to his house[4]."

Also, in the ancient statutes of the canons of S.

[1] Ecclus. xxiv. 3. Wisd. viii. 1. Isai. xl. 14.

[2] Ancient Rites and Monuments of the Abbey Church of Durham, p. 138.

[3] That is, about 1181, in the end of the reign of Henry II. of England.

[4] Cowel's Law Dictionary, word "*O.*"

Quentin's, in France, it is provided, "that the wine at banquets, extraordinary entertainments, charities, and on all *O*'s before Christmas, shall be wholesome and refreshing[1]."

Nor deem it profitless, on chosen days,
The ever busy soul to discipline ;
To clothe herself with robes of holy praise,
Of countless hues, as in the sunbeam shine.

As sunbright days transform the teeming grain,
So these do mould the temper till it grows
To full and golden ripeness, with the train
Of Sabbath thoughts unasked, and Christ's repose.

Cathedral, p. 183.

---

## DECEMBER 31.

## S. Sylvester, Bishop.

## 335.

S. Sylvester was a native of Rome. Of his father Rufinus nothing is known; his mother Justina was a pious and virtuous Christian matron, who devoted herself to the education of her son. It is remarkable how many great saints have been thus trained in their infancy by holy mothers; and many more, whose names are hidden from the eye of men, have owed their knowledge of the faith and discipline of Christ to the gentle lessons and example of their mothers. Justina was assisted by a priest named Charitius or Carinus. In due time the young Sylvester was himself ordained priest by Marcellinus, Bishop of Rome, about the year 286, just before the Emperors Dioclesian and Maximin began their per-

[1] Ducange, Glossary, word "*O*."

secution of the Church. During the years of trial which followed, the youthful saint became remarkable for his zeal and piety. He escaped the fate of his brethren in the persecution, to fulfil higher duties which awaited him in the Church. In October 312, he was a witness of the triumph of Constantine over Maxentius, in a battle fought near Rome.

On the death of Melchiades Bishop of Rome in 314, Sylvester was elected to succeed him. Very soon afterwards, in the autumn of the same year, the council of Arles was assembled to decide the dispute between Cæcilian bishop of Carthage, and the Numidian bishops who followed Donatus of Casanigra. Sylvester was represented in the synod by four legates, two priests, and two deacons. The fathers in twenty-two canons confirmed the decision of the bishops, who with Melchiades had sat in judgment on the same controversy in 313. The party of Donatus, and the Quartodecimans, as they were called, were condemned. Some other important matters were also settled at the same council, regarding the discipline of the Church. Its decisions were sent to Sylvester, with a letter from the fathers full of regret that he was not able to attend in person and assist them with his advice. Among the bishops who composed this council were three from Britain—those of York, London, and Chester.

Sylvester lived in eventful times. Eleven years afterwards the great council of Nicæa met to condemn the heresy of Arius. The Bishop of Rome was represented in the council by two Roman priests, Vito or Victor, and Vincentius; to whom Gelasius

Cyzicus adds, or rather prefixes, the name of Osius, bishop of Cordova in Spain. But Gelasius was a historian of no great authority, in the end of the fifth century; and none of the Catholic writers before him mention the circumstance. In all the histories of the synod, the names of these three persons come before all others, even before the patriarchs of Alexandria and Antioch.

There is a remarkable fact in the life of S. Sylvester, mentioned in a letter which the bishops of Italy, assembled in council at Rome in 368, addressed to the Emperors Gratian and Valentinian. Fleury, who relates it[1], says that it is not to be found elsewhere. They were defending their chief Bishop Damasus, who then filled the see of Rome, from the suspicion of having acted irregularly, in referring an ecclesiastical cause to the judgment of the emperor; and they pleaded that he only followed the example of his predecessors, who allowed the Bishop of Rome to defend himself before the emperor if his cause is not referred to a council. "For Sylvester being accused by sacrilegious men, pleaded his cause before your father (in law) Constantine."

Sylvester filled his see for twenty-one years and eleven months, and died on the 31st of December, 335. He was buried in the cemetery of Priscilla, on the Salarian way. A church was dedicated to God in his honour, by Symmachus Bishop of Rome about the end of the fifth century; in which S. Gregory the Great, on the festival of the saint, pronounced his ninth homily on the gospels. About the end of the seventh century, Sergius Bishop of

[1] Hist. Eccl. Liv. xvii. c. 41.

Rome, removed the body of the saint into this church, and laid it under the high altar. In the beginning of the sixth century an altar at Verona was consecrated to God in his honour. His name is found in very ancient martyrologies. His festival was made general in the Latin Church by Pope Gregory IX. It is kept by the Greeks on the 10th, or, according to Tillemont, on the 12th of January.

List, Christian warrior! thou whose soul is fain
To rid thy mother of her present chain;—
Christ will unloose His Church; yea, even now
Begins the work, and thou
Shalt spend in it thy strength, but e'er He save,
Thy lot shall be the grave.

Lyra Apostolica, p. 227.

---

During the persecution of the Church under the reign of Dioclesian, many Christians were forced by torture and the fear of death to deliver up the holy Scriptures to the persecutors, to be burnt. This was a great sin, almost bordering on apostasy; and by the laws of ecclesiastical discipline the guilty persons became liable to a course of severe public penance; and if in holy orders, they ought to have been deposed. But owing to the circumstances of the times and the great numbers of the *Traditors*, as they were called, the Catholic bishops used the discretion which the Church allowed them, by admitting many of those unhappy persons to communion, and restoring those in orders to the use of their functions, without exacting the canonical penance which was due to their fault. The great danger of a schism was alleged as the chief reason for granting this indulgence. But

some bishops in Numidia in Africa, who affected an unusual zeal, were offended with this mildness, though it was clearly proved in the synod which met at Cirtha, the capital of Numidia, in March, 305, that many of those very persons had been guilty of the same inconstancy, in the day of trial, and thus attempted to conceal their own guilt by a severe condemnation of their lapsed brethren. They were led on by Donatus bishop of Casa-nigra, and refused to communicate with Mensurius bishop of Carthage, and his deacon Cæcilian, because they had admitted traditors to the privileges of the episcopal indulgence. They even had the boldness to accuse Mensurius himself of being a traditor. He died in 311, and was succeeded by Cæcilian. The opposition then became much greater; for besides the original cause of separation, private feelings were added to inflame the minds of the schismatics against the Catholic succession. There was a rich and powerful lady in Carthage named Lucilla, who had formerly been rebuked by Cæcilian for paying a superstitious reverence to a pretended relic, which had not been approved by the bishop as having belonged to a true martyr. When she saw her reprover advanced to the highest dignity in the city, her indignation knew no bounds. She was assisted in her plans for his deposition by two priests, who had been competitors with him for the episcopal chair, and were disappointed by his preferment. "Thus," says Tillemont, quoting from S. Optatus, "did the schism owe its birth to the anger of a turbulent woman; it was fed by the ambition of men who had aspired to the episcopate; and it was strengthened by the avarice

of those who had plundered the goods of the Church[1]."

On the ground that he had held communion with traditors, Donatus refused to communicate with the Bishop of Carthage, and even presumed to celebrate the sacred mysteries in private houses within his diocese. His party also obtained possession of the treasure of the Church, and its sacred vessels and ornaments, from those persons whom Mensurius had entrusted with the care of them. A schismatical synod, consisting of about seventy bishops, met at Carthage, with Secundus chief bishop of Numidia, at their head. Sentence of deposition was pronounced against Cæcilian; and Majorinus, domestic chaplain, or, as some say, steward to Lucilla, was appointed in the room of Mensurius.

The schismatical party referred their cause to the Emperor Constantine, and begged that it might be heard by judges chosen from the Gallican bishops; for among them there had been no persecution, and consequently no traditors. He commissioned the bishops of Cologne, Arles, and Autun, to inquire into the circumstances which were alleged against Cæcilian. Melchiades Bishop of Rome, the bishop of Milan, and a few others were added to the number, and a council of nineteen thus formed sat in judgment upon Cæcilian at Rome, in October 313. He was declared free from blame, and the conduct of Donatus and his party was condemned. From this decision the schismatics appealed to the emperor, and obtained from him the favour of a hearing before another council which was assembled for the purpose

[1] Tom. vi. p. 14.

at Arles in Gaul, in 314. Many bishops were present at it, though the names of only thirty-six are recorded. The decision of the synod of Rome was confirmed. The schismatics once more appealed from the council of Arles to the emperor, who summoned Cæcilian to Rome in 315, and after hearing him in his own defence, pronounced final sentence in his favour, and immediately enacted very severe laws against the Donatists, which however he did not enforce.

This may be considered the first stage of their history, when they had been condemned as schismatics by a council of the Western Church. The immediate effect of this was to separate a number of persons from them, who returned to the communion of the Catholic Church. We may here take a short view of their peculiar tenets, by which they soon became as well known as by the circumstances of their original schism. For it is the natural tendency of every separation from the Church to become wider as it lasts longer; and often that which arose from a matter of discipline soon owes its continuance as much to a defection in vital points of faith.

A great error which the Donatists taught was that the Catholic Church throughout the world had failed, and that the true Church of Christ was confined to the limits of their own sect. They also maintained that the sin of the minister vitiates the sacraments; and that those who communicate with a person in sin become partakers of his sin. Another opinion which they held, and which the Council of Arles condemned, was that baptism could not be validly administered out of the true Church, and hence they

re-baptized all who joined them, Catholics as well as sectaries. Those who condemn this opinion maintain that baptism is valid if given in the name of the blessed Trinity by a layman, a heretic, or a woman, because it depends not on the person who gives it, but on Christ, the principal though invisible minister of the sacraments. And the opposite opinion is held on the ground, that Christ delegated His power to a body of men on earth, who are represented at this day by the clergy of the Church; and that therefore no other can exercise the power which has not been given them. Either opinion is wholly separate from the question of the sin which an unauthorized minister of the sacrament incurs, and whether a pressing necessity may excuse him. The validity of baptism to the receiver is the only point at issue. It is perhaps needless to mention that all the Churches of the Roman Obedience hold the former opinion. The chief advocates of the latter have been found in England. Besides the supporters of these two opinions regarding baptism, there are some who maintain that it is ordinarily valid only when administered by one who has received episcopal ordination, either within or without the Church. This is the doctrine of many who are commonly called English High-churchmen; it was also believed by most of the Non-jurors. Others again, with whom are most of the Greek Fathers, teach that baptism is valid when given by one who is episcopally ordained, and who holds right faith. Wholly distinct from these is the question, whether persons baptized in schism partake of the benefits of their baptism till they are reconciled to the Church. It would occupy too

much time to enter on the history of these most difficult questions, and the various arguments which have been used in support of each. They are questions which involve vital consequences, and therefore have deservedly employed the learning and research of innumerable doctors of the Church.

The hatred of the Donatists to the Catholics was also very remarkable. Whenever they gained possession of a church which had belonged to the orthodox, they used various ceremonies to purify it from the defilement which, as they supposed, it had contracted. The vessels and cloths used in the service of the altar were washed; the pavement and walls were scraped; and the altar itself was frequently destroyed. They had not yet attained sufficient power to show their hatred in a more dangerous way. In re-baptizing the Catholics they showed still more fearfully how far astray their opposition to the Church had carried them. In the use of the form of exorcism, which in ancient times accompanied baptism, they thus addressed the spirit which dwelt in the catechumen, "Depart from him, thou cursed one!" One trembles to write, that in all Catholics whom they thus exorcised that spirit was the good Spirit of God! The sect was confined chiefly to Africa. A few members of it were found in Rome, but its chief seat was in Mauritania and Numidia. It was alleged, in proof of its uncatholic condition, that only two languages were spoken in its communion,—the Punic and the Latin. Whereas the Catholic Church embraces every nation and language.

In 316, the year after Constantine had finally con-

demned the sect, Majorinus the schismatical bishop of Carthage died; and Donatus, a man of austere life, succeeded him. He was famed for his learning and eloquence; and some imagine that from him the name of Donatists was derived, and not from Donatus, bishop of Casa-nigra. He is described as a man of great ambition, and of a vain and passionate temper. From this time the number of his party rapidly increased; till in 330 we read of a Donatist council at Carthage, which consisted of two hundred and seventy bishops.

As the party increased in numbers it was not at first divided into sects of any great importance; till, after having existed for nearly a century, two great divisions arose in the parties of the Primianists and Maximianists. Besides these, there were small bodies who separated from the great sect, but never seriously diminished its numbers. Such, sooner or later, is the inevitable fate of all schismatical bodies; for those whom the authority of the Catholic Church could not keep in obedience and unity of faith, can never be very long held together by the weak ties of a party. Each sect was named from its founder; and each claimed to be the only true Church, and rebaptized all who came to it. Nearly five hundred bishops were included under the general name of Donatists at that period, separated among these various sects. A most mischievous party of fanatics, the Circumcellians, appeared in 347. They seem to have belonged to the great Donatist body, and devoted themselves, as they said, to martyrdom; and after living a life of great indulgence and licence for several months, threw themselves from steep rocks and

into rivers, hoping thus to obtain the crown of martyrdom. They often tried to compel travellers to murder them, by threatening them with death if they refused. As they increased in numbers, the disorders and confusion in the country which they infested became intolerable. Immorality of every kind began to prevail, and the arm of the law was often required to put down the disturbances which they created. Severe measures were resorted to against them by Constantine, Valentinian, Gratian, and Theodosius the Great.

In 347 the Arians endeavoured to take advantage of the Donatist schism to increase their own party, but without success. In 348 the Emperor Constantius sent two persons, Paul and Macarius, into Africa, to distribute his bounties, and if possible to restore harmony. Macarius suppressed the rebellious Circumcellians, who had risen in open revolt. He banished the obstinate bishops, and by great exertions reduced the party to the last extremity. This depression lasted from 348 till 362. It may be considered the second stage in this miserable schism, when, scattered by the arm of human power, and its chief abettors in exile, it seemed wholly extinguished. But, as if to show the weakness of such aid even in the defence of truth, it was permitted once more to gather strength, only to make the triumph of the Faith more complete.

In 362 the banished bishops petitioned Julian the Apostate to restore them to their country, and to their former privileges in it. This request he readily granted, as it tended to weaken the Christian party by internal discord. Dreadful were the outrages

which the triumphant Donatists committed on their return to Africa. They attacked the Catholics with savage violence, and having driven them out of their churches, they profaned and demolished the sacred buildings; melting down the holy vessels, and exposing the metal to public sale; and even throwing the blessed Eucharist to the dogs. Whatever had been used by the Catholics was doomed to destruction. It was at this crisis that the first great champion of the cause of truth appeared, with no other weapon than the persuasive eloquence of his writings. Parmenian, the schismatical successor of Donatus in Carthage had written an elaborate defence of his party. This roused the energy of S. Optatus, Catholic bishop of Milevetum, who, in a masterly reply, refuted all the arguments of his adversary, and turned them against himself. From his own principle, that there is but one Church and one Baptism, he established the claim of the Catholic Church to the privileges of both. This work appeared about the year 370. Ten years afterwards, the Emperor Gratian ordered the Donatists to restore their churches to the Catholics. But they soon recovered their former power, and renewed their persecutions with more than their former cruelty. When S. Augustin first came to Hippo, about 390, the schismatical bishop Faustinus had laid an interdict upon any bread being baked in the city for the Catholics. The fury of the schismatics was then at its height; but S. Augustin immediately devoted himself to oppose them in every way; by writing against them, by private conferences, and by preaching throughout his diocese the doctrines of the Catholic faith. He

soon began to make a visible impression on the minds of the people, which increased the fury of the Donatists so much, that they publicly declared that it would be an acceptable service to God to kill him. Troops of Circumcellians laid wait for him; and once he escaped only by his guide missing the way. Yet he often interceded for them when they were condemned by the civil authority to fine and imprisonment; and he exhorted the Catholics to labour for their conversion by prayer and fasting. He was assisted by the Emperor Honorius in his exertions to gather a conference of bishops at Carthage, which at length opened in June 411. The whole number of Catholic bishops in Africa at that time has been computed at four hundred and seventy. The Donatist bishops, of whom nearly all were present at Carthage during the conference, belonged only to the great body; for among the sects there were nearly as many more. Two hundred and eighty-six Catholic bishops on one side were arrayed against the two hundred and seventy-nine of the schismatical party on the other. Seven bishops were chosen from each side to conduct the debates; four more were appointed to superintend and observe the notaries who wrote down all that passed; and an additional council of seven bishops on each side was named for reference in difficulties. The tribune Marcellinus presided. The remaining Catholic bishops devoted themselves to retirement, prayer, fasting, and almsdeeds. When the debates began, the Donatists refused to be seated in the company of their adversaries. After the arguments on either side were concluded, Marcellinus pronounced sentence on the

matters of fact in favour of the Catholics. The result of this conference was the return of many schismatical bishops and their flocks to the bosom of the Church. Their dignities were confirmed to them on their joining the Catholic communion.

The rage of the defeated party hurried them on to the most daring acts of violence; in the diocese of Hippo, Restitutus a priest was waylaid and murdered. The Emperor Honorius enacted new laws against them; banishing their clergy, and restoring the churches to the Catholics. From that time the influence of the sect declined; and though, from the testimony of S. Gregory, it appears to have revived a little in the end of the sixth century, it never was able again seriously to disturb the peace of the Church.

The history of the Donatists resembles, in some important points, the career of the enemies of the Catholic Church in later times. Their presumption, and worldly policy, and sacrilege, and hatred of the Church, have descended to our own day. And the same internal dissensions which arose among them still mark all bodies separated from the Catholic communion. They also affected greater severity and strictness than the Church, just as purity and spirituality of worship are boasted of in these days. But obedience was wanting, which is the fruit of love, the first of the Christian graces. In their numbers also, and in their freedom from heresy on many points of faith, as the mystery of the blessed Trinity, they resembled some of the enemies of the Church in this age. And this is the chief lesson of their melancholy schism. It is no new thing to hear

the authority of the Church disparaged and set at nought by rival sects, with every circumstance of impiety and sacrilege which the power of wicked men can add to their disobedience. Such things were done 1500 years ago, and the Church remains; but her ancient enemies are no where to be found but in the page of history, and in the writings of those who defended the faith against them. Such must, ere long, be the fate of her enemies now; no weapon formed against her can prosper. "So let all Thine enemies perish, O Lord, but let them that love Thee be as the sun going forth in his might."

The Church in very early times was not unanimous in the time of celebrating the festival of Easter. Some provincial branches, as those of Lesser Asia, observed it on the 14th day of the first lunar month after the spring equinox, without regard to the day of the week on which it fell. This was the way in which the Jews calculated the day of their passover; and those Christians who continued the practice after it was condemned by the council of Arles, were called Quartodecimans. The council of Nicæa confirmed its decision, and finally enjoined that the feast of Easter should be kept on the Sunday following the first full moon after the 21st of March, unless the full moon should fall on a Sunday, in which case the festival should be observed on the Sunday following. The ancient British and Irish Churches long retained a slightly different practice, by omitting to transfer the feast when the full moon fell on a Sunday; but after many conferences the Catholic practice was finally adopted, and is now universal throughout the whole Church. The error of the ancient British

Churches was thus distinct from the Quartodecimans', though they did not comply with the whole injunction of the Nicene Council. A slight variety in discipline from the practice of other branches of the Church is not of itself schismatical; but when the Church has condemned it by the voice of her Council, no one can continue to practise it without placing his own private opinion above the judgment of the Church, which is the root and foundation of all schism.

# JANUARY.

---

## JANUARY 8.

## S. Lucian, Priest and Martyr.

290.

THERE is much uncertainty regarding the history of this holy martyr. Some writers maintain that he was a disciple of S. Peter, and followed the blessed Apostle from Antioch to Rome. Others say that he was sent into Gaul by S. Clement Bishop of Rome about the end of the first century, and suffered death under the reign of Domitian. It is certain, however, that he came into Gaul to preach the faith to the pagan inhabitants, and that he finished his labours at Beauvais by the death of a martyr. This happened most probably in the third century. There is good reason to believe that he was of noble Roman blood, and that he accompanied S. Dionysius of Paris, or S. Quintin of Amiens, on their mission into Gaul, about the year 245. They were the chief of a company of devoted missioners who were sent by S. Fabian Bishop of Rome, to preach the Catholic faith in pagan countries, most of whom were honoured with the crown of martyrdom. S. Dionysius is not

to be confounded with the saint of that name at Athens, who is usually called the Areopagite. The Bishop of Paris is commemorated in the Anglican kalendar on the 9th of October. When he and his companions arrived in Gaul, he fixed his abode at Paris; S. Quintin proceeded to Amiens, and S. Lucian to Beauvais, with two friends, Maximian and Julian. They devoted themselves with unwearied ardour to preaching and baptizing, in the face of danger and death; and in the persecution which raged under Julian, the prefect of Gaul, the two companions of the saint sealed their testimony with their blood. Lucian, in a little while after, followed their glorious example, about the year 290. They suffered in different places, but their remains were laid by their faithful disciples in the same tomb. It remained long concealed, till S. Evroul abbat of a monastery near Amiens, in the end of the sixth century, was directed by a vision where to find it. A stately abbey was founded in the eighth century at Beauvais, in which the precious relics of the martyrs were deposited in three sumptuous shrines. They were renowned for miracles in the following age, as Rabanus Maurus testifies.

In most kalendars, as in the Anglican, S. Lucian is mentioned only as a priest, but an ancient one of the ninth age styles him bishop. He is called the Apostle of Beauvais in the Parisian Breviary.

Faint not, and fret not, for threatened woe,
 Watchman on Truth's grey height!
Few though the faithful, and fierce though the foe,
 Weakness is aye Heaven's might.

Quail not, and quake not, thou warder bold,
Be there no friend in sight;
Turn thee to question the days of old,
When weakness was aye Heaven's might.

Time's years are many, Eternity one,
And one is the Infinite;
The chosen are few, few the deeds well done;
So scantness is still Heaven's might.

Lyra Apostolica, p. 108.

---

JANUARY 13.

## S. Hilary, Bishop and Confessor.

368.

S. HILARY was born at Poictiers in Gaul. There is some reason to believe that his family was illustrious in that country. His parents were pagans; and he gives an account of his conversion to the faith of Christ in his book on the Trinity. After his admission into the Church by baptism, so holy and recollected was his behaviour, that it was said of him, that while he was yet a laic he seemed to have already received the grace of the priesthood. Even in those stricter times he was remarkable for carefully avoiding the society of Jews and heretical persons. Little is known of the circumstances of his early life, except these general facts; and thus God often trains in secrecy the future rulers and defenders of His Church.

It is probable that S. Hilary was elected bishop of Poictiers from the rank of a laic, as was often the case in the early ages; when that high office was as dangerous as it was honourable, and needed men of

heroic courage to meet the pagan and heretical enemies of the Church. The date of his consecration was about the year 350. He soon became renowned in Gaul as a preacher; and S. Martin, afterwards Bishop of Tours, then a young man, was attracted by his name, and lived for a time at Poictiers as his disciple. Hilary wished to ordain him deacon, but the humility of Martin was so great, that he would receive no higher order than an exorcist's.

Immediately after the Arian council at Milan in 355, which had condemned Athanasius, and had prevailed on the Emperor Constantius to banish all the bishops who adhered to him, S. Hilary wrote to the emperor, entreating him to stop the persecution, to recal the Catholic bishops, and to forbid secular judges to interfere in church affairs. His remonstrance had no effect, but he had the satisfaction of seeing the Gallican bishops remain firm during those days of trial. Saturninus bishop of Arles, alone united with Ursatius and Valens, two Illyrian bishops, to vex the Catholics. They held an Arian synod at Beziers in Languedoc, at which Saturninus himself presided. S. Hilary there made a noble confession of the Nicene faith, and refuted the heresy of Arius; but the party of Saturninus, reinforced by bishops from the neighbouring countries, was too strong for him, and he was condemned and deposed; and immediately afterwards the Emperor Constantius banished him into Phrygia.

He left Gaul early in the year 356, in company with Rhodanus bishop of Toulouse, whom God called from those evils to His kingdom soon after

their arrival in Phrygia. His departure was followed by a cruel persecution of the Gallican clergy; but nothing could daunt their constancy, or prevail on them to communicate with the enemies of S. Hilary and the Nicene Faith, or to fill up his see, which in the eye of the Church was not vacant. The priests and deacons of Toulouse were severely beaten, and their Church profaned. In 357 the Bishops wrote a letter to Hilary, assuring him of their fidelity and firmness. What comfort such a letter would bring to him in his exile may well be imagined. The news of the faithful courage of the Gallican bishops confirmed the faith of many in the Eastern Church, which was then sadly torn by the Arian and Semi-Arian parties. At that time the latter faction had influence over Constantius, who vacillated between the two, and many of the bishops who followed Arius were in banishment.

About the same time S. Hilary received a letter from Apra, his only daughter, (for in his youth he had been married[1],) informing him that she had been asked in marriage by a young man. She was then about thirteen or fourteen years of age. He immediately wrote to her, intreating her to set her thoughts on the more precious rewards which the Lord Jesus has promised to those virgins who devote themselves

[1] Those who are anxious to claim the sanction of the early ages of Christianity for the practice of the modern Anglican clergy in this respect, may consult with advantage, among other writers, S. Jerome's Treatises against Jovinian and Vigilantius, which record the opinion of the Church in the fourth age regarding the celibacy of the priesthood.

wholly to their heavenly Spouse, and are not entangled in the snares of earthly love [1]. He reminded her of that blissful company whom the Church remembers on the feast of Holy Innocents, who sing a new song which no man can learn but they who are virgins, and follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth [2]. She yielded to his pious counsel; and on his return home God took her to Himself at his request, without pain or any visible sickness. Bishop Jeremy Taylor relates this little story in his own beautiful language in the "Holy Dying [3]."

In return for the comforting letter which the Gallican bishops had sent him, and at their request to be informed regarding the faith of the Eastern Churches, S. Hilary wrote his "History of Synods" in the end of the year 358. It contains a history of the various councils that had been assembled in the East on the subject of the Arian heresy; together with a defence of the Nicene faith. It is addressed to the British bishops among others, whom he congratulates on their stedfastness. The saint also wrote his book "on the Trinity" during his exile; and a smaller treatise "against the Arians." In his style he is said to have imitated Quinctilian. He also composed a matin and a vesper hymn for his daughter Apra; and in the council of Toledo in 633, he was mentioned as the probable author of the hymns "Ut queant laxis" on the feast of the Nativity of S. John the Baptist; and "Pange lingua—lauream certaminis" on the Sixth Day of Holy Week.

[1] S. Matth. xix. 29; S. Mark x. 29, 30; S. Luke xviii. 29, 30; 1 Cor. vii. 38.

[2] See the Epistle for the day. [3] Ch. iii. Sect. 7, § 6.

In 359 the Western bishops held a synod at Rimini, at which nearly four hundred were present. The Arian party among them beguiled the rest by its address to sanction its errors by their signatures. The bishops of Agen and Tongres took a prominent lead in the proceedings of the synod.

In September of the same year S. Hilary was invited with other Catholic bishops, by the Semi-Arians to their council at Seleucia in Isauria. Their object was to defeat the Arians, and they hoped that the Catholics would assist them. As he was on his way thither, he stopped on a Sunday at a little village, and went into the church. A peasant girl named Florentia immediately cried out that a servant of Christ was there, and falling at his feet besought him to make the sign of the cross over her. Her father Florentius and his whole family asked and received the sacrament of baptism from his hands. They were probably Arians, and had not been baptized in the name of the ever-blessed Trinity.

In the council of Sèleucia, Hilary bore witness to the faith of the Western Church being the same as that declared to be the Catholic faith at the council of Nicæa in 325, and he protested against both the Arian and Semi-Arian opinions as novelties. He accompanied the deputies of the council to Constantinople, in hopes of obtaining from the Emperor Constantius the recal of his sentence of banishment. He found the Arian party supreme at court, and the Semi-Arian deputies from the council of Rimini united with the others against him as a common enemy. While the Arian synod was sitting at Constantinople, in January 360, he entreated the Empe-

ror to grant him a conference with Saturninus bishop of Arles the author of his exile, and that he might be allowed to appear in the synod and bear witness to the Catholic faith. He also complained of the perplexity which the multiplication of creeds and confessions of faith had occasioned. For in the preceding year alone there had been four published to the Church; that of the council at Sirmium, 22nd May; that of Antioch, renewed by the Semi-Arians at Seleucia; of Rimini; and of the Acacians at Seleucia.

The emperor refused to grant S. Hilary what he asked; but the Arians so much dreaded his presence in the East, that they persuaded Constantius to send him back to Gaul, yet without formally recalling the sentence of exile. And thus, like his blessed Master, was Hilary once more a wanderer, cast out of the company of the unholy as a dangerous enemy[1]. The joy of his return to his church and his native country was much lessened by the miserable confusion which he left behind him in the East. Still it must have been very great; and his approach was hailed with delight by the church of Gaul. S. Martin, who had been living in retirement in the island of Gallenaire, off the city of Genoa, went to Rome to meet him; but finding that he had already left it, he followed him to Poictiers, and soon after built a monastery near the town. S. Hilary immediately applied himself to repair the mischief which the council of Rimini had done; and a synod was assembled at Paris, which condemned its proceedings, and de-

[1] S. Luke viii. 37. Gal. iv. 16.

clared the true faith of the *consubstantiality* of the Son of God. The bishops also corresponded with their banished brethren in the East.

In 363 Hilary made a journey into Italy in company with Eusebius of Vercelli. They were at Milan in the autumn of the following year, at the time when the Emperor Valentinian arrived there. The people were Catholic, and even abstained from entering the churches, to avoid communicating with Auxentius their Arian bishop. In a public disputation which the emperor invited him to hold, S. Hilary extorted from the Arian a confession of the Nicene faith, which was taken down in writing and preserved. Auxentius was enraged at being thus vanquished, and prevailed on the emperor to send Hilary away from Milan. Before his departure he addressed a letter to the Catholic bishops and laity in the neighbourhood, exhorting them to remain firm. This was the last public act of his life which is recorded. He returned home to Poictiers, and finished his labours by a blessed death, in January 368, as the greatest number of historians testify, though Fleury places the event a year earlier. A brilliant light is said to have filled the chamber where the body of the holy man was lying.

Various contradictory accounts are given of the translation of his remains, none of which are worthy of any credit. His tomb at Poictiers was violated by the Calvinist heretics in 1562. A book of the Gospels in his handwriting was bequeathed by Perpetuus bishop of Tours in 474, to Euphonius bishop of Autun, and was long preserved as a precious relic of the saint. The martyrologies mention

his death on the 13th January; but as that day is kept in all churches of the Roman Obedience as the octave day of our Lord's Epiphany, in honour of the mystery of His Baptism, the feast of S. Hilary is transferred to the following day. His name occurs also in some kalendars on the 26th June and the 1st November, probably in remembrance of some translations. The prayers are still extant which were said in France on the day of his feast before the time of Charlemagne; and in many sacramentaries his name is inserted in the canon of the Mass.

S. Gregory of Tours, attests the truth of a miracle performed at his tomb; and others also are authenticated by various writers. "In a word," says Tillemont, "they were so frequent and so well known in the time of S. Nicetus bishop of Treves, that he appeals to them to prove the truth of the faith against the Arians." He thus wrote in 561 to Clodosindis, the wife of Alboin the Arian king of the Lombards, though she was herself a Catholic: "What shall I say of the relics of the holy bishops Germanus, Hilary, and Lupus? at which daily so great miracles are wrought, that we cannot recount them all; and the demoniacs are tortured, and confess their virtue." The first law term in the year in England is called after the name of this saint, "Hilary term." These terms were regulated at first by the canonical constitution of the Church, which "exempted certain holy seasons from being profaned by the tumult of forensic litigation. Such were particularly the time of Advent and Christmas, which gave rise to the winter vacation; the time of Lent and Easter, which created that in

spring; the time of Pentecost, which produced the third; and the long vacation, between Midsummer and Michaelmas, which was allowed for the hay-time and harvest. The portions of time which were not included within these prohibited seasons fell naturally into a fourfold division; and from some festival or saint's day that immediately preceded their commencement, were denominated the terms of S. Hilary, of Easter, of the Holy Trinity, and of S. Michael.... The octave of S. Hilary, or the eighth day inclusive after the feast of that saint, is the first day of Hilary term, and falls on the 20th January, the feast itself being kept on the 13th[1]." This has been slightly altered by a late Act of Parliament.

> Star of the west! when all the skies grew dark,
> And Arian clouds concealed heaven's genial eye,
> Christ sent thee forth to guide his labouring ark,
> From his own peaceful palace ever nigh;
> Still where thy Church her annual pathway steers,
> High in the heavens thy radiant sign appears.
>
> Angel of Poictiers! Aquitanian Saint!
> Exile to thee was drawing nearer home;
> For where Christ is was home to thee; the plaint
> Of thy bereaved Church doth thence become
> Her gladness, when she welcomes thee returned,
> And hails the light which in thine exile burned.

Cathedral, p. 290.

---

Arius the heresiarch, was a native of Lybia in Africa. He was a man of pleasing appearance and of a grave and serious address, under which he con-

[1] Blackstone's Commentaries, book iii. chap. 18.

cealed an immoderate love of glory and novelty. He was so composed in his manners, and had such an air of sanctity combined with modesty and silence, as to deceive the simple and unwary. A description of his appearance is found in a letter which the Emperor Constantine wrote after the heresy had begun to spread. It represents him as of weak and exhausted body, of a pale, haggard, and emaciated countenance, glassy eye, and disordered dress. But this picture may perhaps be exaggerated.

He was ordained deacon in 306 by Peter bishop of the church of Alexandria, on his leaving the sect of the Meletians. He soon after returned to it, and was excommunicated. Achillas, who succeeded Peter in the see of Alexandria, restored him, and ordained him priest. On the death of Achillas, in the year 311 or 312, he aspired to the bishopric, and being disappointed by the election of S. Alexander, he began to put forth his blasphemies. He taught that the Son of God was not God equal to the Father, and the same in substance with Him, but was a creature made by Him of nothing, though unlike other created beings and superior to them; that this creation was not from eternity, yet was before time; that the Son is not the true Word and Wisdom of God; and that He was capable of sinning, but preferred virtue, and was honoured by God with a high place of glory, as it were in advance of His actual performance of good, for God foresaw what His choice would be. Arius even dared to say that the Father was invisible to the Son, and unknown by Him: he denied the human soul of our Lord, making His Divinity supply the place of a soul. His real

opinions regarding the Holy Spirit do not appear, nor how far he has to answer for the errors of his followers on that subject.

Alexander having first tried to subdue him by mildness, excommunicated him in a synod of eighty of his clergy, and afterwards in a council of a hundred Egyptian bishops, in the year 319, or early in 320. Two bishops and many of the clergy of Alexandria were included in this sentence; and such confusion did they create in the city, that the disputes among the Christians were publicly satirized in the pagan theatres.

Arius then went into Palestine, where, by disguising and modifying his real sentiments, and by the skilful use of flattery to aid his purpose, he gained over to his party many bishops and others, who interceded for him with Alexander. His greatest ally was Eusebius bishop of Beryta in Phœnicia, afterwards of Nicomedia the capital of Bithynia, and finally of Constantinople. Eusebius was high in favour at the court of Licinius, and had formerly made himself useful to him by assisting him in his persecution of the Christians. Arius was enabled by his means to undermine the faith of Constantia the wife of Licinius, sister of Constantine the Great. A council of bishops in Bithynia convoked by Eusebius, received the heresiarch into communion, and wrote on his behalf to all the Catholic bishops, entreating them to use their influence with Alexander for his restoration.

The Emperor Constantine, having become master of the East by the defeat of Licinius, wrote to S. Alexander and Arius in 324, exhorting them to be recon-

ciled. He also sent Osius, bishop of Cordova in Spain, to Alexandria, who, in a council of bishops and clergy there, examined the cause of Arius, and condemned him anew. After some letters had passed between them, the emperor summoned the heresiarch to court to answer for himself. Constantine was not satisfied with his defence; and in June 325 he called the first general council of the Church at Nicea, where Arius publicly declared his doctrine, and was condemned. The emperor immediately banished him into Illyria. All his adherents, except the two bishops Secundus and Theonas, subscribed the Nicene confession, rather than share the punishment of their leader. Two others, Eusebius and Theognis, were afterwards banished into Gaul for having communicated with his party.

In 330 Arius was recalled from banishment, and went to court, when he satisfied the emperor by subscribing a creed of his own framing, in which his doctrine was expressed ambiguously. He then went to Alexandria; but S. Athanasius, who then filled the see, refused him admittance into the Church, or even into the city. His proceedings for the next five years are unknown. Probably he was engaged in exciting the Eusebian party against Athanasius. Many crimes began to be publicly laid to the charge of the holy bishop, from which he was enjoined by the emperor to clear himself before the council of Tyre, in 335. There is reason to believe that Arius was present at its sittings; and it was wholly devoted to his interests. And accordingly, although Athanasius refuted every calumny of his enemies in the clearest manner, he was found guilty and de-

posed. By the desire of Constantine, the bishops adjourned from Tyre to Jerusalem, to assist at the consecration of his new church of the Resurrection; and they, forming a new council, admitted the Arians to communion. Athanasius was banished by the emperor into Gaul. This year was one of deep humiliation and affliction to the Catholic Church.

In 336 Arius returned to Constantinople, and deceived the emperor by his artful dissimulation. Alexander the aged bishop of the see was publicly commanded by Constantine to receive him into communion on the following Sunday. The old man retired from the imperial presence without making any answer, and besought the King of kings to spare the Church such an indignity, and to remove either himself or Arius from the world. On the next Saturday, without any warning, and in the heyday of his expected triumph, Arius perished by a fearful death. The holy bishop departed in the month of August of the same year, and the Eusebians gained possession of his see.

The death of Constantine in 337 was a sad event for the Church. For though he had banished Athanasius and his friends, he had forbidden their sees to be filled up; and he always showed a great regard for the Catholic bishops. His severity against Athanasius was rather personal, than from any hatred to him as a defender of the faith. His son Constantius, a prince of a weak understanding and vacillating purpose, was wholly devoted to the Eusebian faction. Constantine and Constans, who succeeded their father in the west, supported the Catholic cause. In Constantinople Eusebius, a eunuch and a slave, pos-

sessed the supreme power; and the whole weight of his authority and influence with the emperor was added to the interest of Arius. Notwithstanding, in the following year Athanasius and the other banished bishops were restored to their churches, at the intercession of the bishops and the emperors of the West. The Eusebians, or disguised Arians, invited Julius Bishop of Rome, and the Western bishops, to decide between them and Athanasius. But when he summoned them to Rome they refused to go; and assembled a council of about a hundred bishops of their own party at Antioch in 341, in which Athanasius was again condemned, and a new symbol or creed was adopted. In the mean time the Western bishops assembled at Rome had pronounced sentence in favour of Athanasius.

In 342 Eusebius the chief leader of the Arians, died; and was succeeded in his usurped see of Constantinople by Macedonius, who gave his name to a sect of the Arian party. The people opposed his entrance with violence; and in the tumult the general of cavalry, who had charge of expelling Paul the true bishop from the city, was murdered. The Western Church refused to treat with the Eusebian party, though a legation was sent by it to obtain the sanction of the orthodox for its confession of faith.

At Antioch in 345 the Eusebians refined still more on the heresy of Arius, and declared the Son to be *like* the Father in all things, and not to be created of nothing. But they could not persuade the Catholics to receive their new symbol; for these acknowledged the sole authority of the Nicene. The next ten years may be considered the stationary

period of Arianism, during which it was supported by the court influence in the East, and afterwards in the West also; while the revival of the opposite heresy of Sabellianism by Photinus and others united its members more closely to each other. This period was also marked by the separation of the Semi-Arian party from the original sect of Arius and Eusebius. It afterwards approached nearer the Catholics, and finally joined them.

While the orthodox synod of Sardica was sitting in 347, seventy-six of the Eusebian bishops assembled at Philippopolis, yet dated their proceedings as if they had really taken place at Sardica. They deposed Osius bishop of Cordova, Julius Bishop of Rome, and others who supported Athanasius. They also composed a confession, which seems to have been quite Catholic, except in the omission of the word *consubstantial.* The orthodox council of Sardica declared those deposed bishops innocent, and condemned the principal Eusebians.

The persecution against the Catholics was continued with great cruelty. In 352 Constantius became emperor of the West, by the death of Constans and the defeat of his rivals; and he redoubled his exertions in the Eusebian cause.

In 355, at the request of Liberius Bishop of Rome, an orthodox council assembled at Milan. But the emperor overawed it by his soldiers, and it was forced to hold its sittings in the palace. All the bishops who would not confirm the condemnation of Athanasius, in obedience to the will of Constantius, were banished, among whom were Liberius and Osius. The mines and prisons were filled with

Catholics, and many fled into foreign countries to escape the dangers which threatened them at home. S. Athanasius was also for the third time driven from his see.

Afterwards there followed some less important councils; as of Beziers in France, which condemned S. Hilary; of Sirmium, whose Semi-Arian confession Osius was prevailed on to sign; of Ancyra, which condemned the Anomeans or Aëtians, followers of Aëtius a deacon of Antioch, who about the year 348 had revived the grosser doctrines of Arius; and a later council of Sirmium in 358, in which the Semi-Arian party first formally separated from the Eusebian, which then approached more nearly to the extreme Arian or Anomean.

In 357 Liberius Bishop of Rome was tempted to make unworthy concessions to the Arians, in order to obtain his recal to Rome. In 359 four hundred bishops met at Rimini, and received the symbol of Nicea; but were afterwards betrayed by the arts of the Arians, supported by the emperor's authority, into an approval of their doctrines. In the East a hundred and sixty Semi-Arian bishops assembled at Seleucia, where Athanasius was secretly present, as some suppose; and where S. Hilary refuted the calumny of the Arians, that the Gallican Church was Sabellian. This council also condemned the Anomeans.

In opposition to the council of Seleucia the extreme Arian party held a council at Constantinople in 360, in which the principal Semi-Arian bishops were deposed. Those who would not subscribe the formulary of Rimini were banished. In a small

council of the Arian sect, under Aëtius, at Antioch, a new confession was framed. This was the eighteenth in the short space of half a century. At this time the Church was in the lowest state of depression. The Bishop of Rome was an apostate; Osius of Cordova had also fallen, and was dead; Athanasius was an exile in the deserts; and nearly all the sees in the East, and many in the West, were filled with Arian bishops. And the emperor who supported them by his authority was then in the prime of life.

At the death of Constantius in 362, and the accession of Julian, all the banished bishops were restored, and Athanasius returned in triumph to Egypt. The Nicene faith was confirmed in many provincial councils in the following year. During the latter part of Julian's reign the disturbances caused by the Arian factions were much lessened by the general persecution of all bearing the Christian name. Jovian his successor discouraged as much as he was able all religious discord. Under Valentinian in the West the Catholic faith upon the whole prevailed, though he himself rather leaned to the Arian creed. But in the East Valens persecuted the followers of the Nicene creed with much cruelty. In 370 eighty deputies from the Catholics, who had been sent to remonstrate with him, were put into a ship and towed out to sea and burned. In 372 the life of his son was saved by the prayers of S. Basil; and the bishop thus obtained so much influence with the emperor, as to prevent all persecution in Pontus and Cappadocia. During this last and greatest assault of the Arian foe upon the Church, her courage

was supported by S. Basil and other holy fathers. In the midst of it her great champion S. Athanasius entered into the joy of his Lord, in the year 373. The bishops of the council of Illyria under Valentinian wrote to the churches of Asia to encourage them, and remonstrated with the persecuting party.

In 378 the death of Valens relieved the East from persecution; and the confessors of Christ returned from exile, bearing the marks of many honourable wounds. In 379 under Theodosius the Great, S. Gregory Nazianzen re-established the faith in Constantinople. Theodosius restored the churches to the Catholics, but allowed the Arians to rebuild a ruined chapel for their own use.

In 381 the second Ecumenical council was held at Constantinople, which confirmed the Nicene confession, and acknowledged the Son to be *consubstantial* with the Father. In 383 the emperor gathered a conference of all the sects at Constantinople, with the hope of persuading them to unite with the Church. In the debates which were held among them he always supported the Catholics.

In the West the Empress Justina made great efforts in 386 to revive the creed of Rimini; but by the firmness of S. Ambrose bishop of Milan she was prevented. From this time the importance of Arianism diminished; and little remains to be said of it, except that in 392 Theodosius published an edict forbidding, under the penalty of a heavy fine, any of the heretics to take, give, or receive the title of *cleric*.

Thus, upon the whole, we see that the name of Eusebians was soon assumed by the original and

proper Arians, by whom are meant those who were condemned by the Alexandrian Council in 319, and afterwards by the Nicene in 325, and who were received back into communion in the council of Jerusalem in 335. In the earliest stages of the heresy the Eusebians remained ostensibly in the Church, though there is reason to believe that they were one in faith with the bolder Arians. But as the disciples of Arius by degrees refined the grosser articles of his doctrine, they united with the more cautious party, and became known by the general name of Eusebians. They framed new formularies of faith, and persecuted Athanasius with unrelenting hatred, as the great defender of the Nicene confession. The original Arians diminished rapidly, and are not much heard of after 341, till their extreme opinions were revived in 349 by Aëtius, who was formally condemned by the Eusebians.

The Eusebians were first excommunicated in the Council of Sardica in 347, and afterwards in the Council of Milan in 355. After the year 357 they were divided into factions. Those called pure Arians, Aëtians, Eunomians, Anomeans, or *Dissimiles*, maintained most of the grosser heresies of Arius. The Semi-Arian party allowed the Son to be in substance like the Father, yet not so much by nature as by grace, or as any pure creature may be said to resemble his Creator. They often expressed themselves so as to seem almost Catholic. The sect of the Macedonians was made up of persons from both of the others, and was divided in its creed in consequence. Those who had come to it from the Arians believed the Son to be begotten before all time,

though not from eternity, and denied the Catholic faith regarding the Holy Spirit; while the Semi-Arian Macedonians, if I may use the phrase, seem to have erred only in their belief regarding the Third Person in the Blessed Trinity. The Macedonians became a distinct sect about the year 360. And after the death of Constantius in 362 the Semi-Arian party began to be known under their name. Many of these really held the true faith, but from their refusal to receive the word *Consubstantial* into their symbol, rendered themselves liable to suspicion. S. Basil, S. Cyril, and other holy men, either belonged to them, or freely communicated with them. Their party in the East was partially united to the Church of Egypt and the Western bishops in the Council of Alexandria in 362; and in 365 they made proposals for a union with Liberius and the Western Church. They were reconciled by their deputies at Rome, on publicly acknowledging their former errors, and subscribing the Nicene faith. In 367 they were formally received into the Church in the council of Tyanax in Cappadocia. But in 378 they seem to have relapsed; or perhaps those of them who had not been accessory to the reconciliation then resumed the name of the party; though, indeed, it is doubted whether they were ever perfectly united to the Church, even at the council of Tyanax.

The Arian heresy prevailed chiefly in the East. It is now difficult to say whether the whole of the Eastern Church was ever at one time perverted by it. The Bishops of Egypt seem to have always remained Catholic; and at the orthodox council of Sardica in 347, some bishops of Palestine and Cyprus

were present. But the rigour of discipline was often relaxed, and the Catholics often communicated with the Eusebians. The holy solitaries in Egypt and other places were of great use in preserving the faith in the East. For they had nothing to hope for on earth, and so the malice and fury of the Arian persecutors fell harmless upon them; and the people held them in the greatest reverence for their sanctity.

After the seventh century nothing is heard of Arianism till the sixteenth—an age fruitful in heresies and novelties of every kind, beyond all others in the history of the Church. Servetus a native of Aragon was among its first revivers, and was publicly burnt at Geneva in 1556. Calvin was the most active of his persecutors, and wrote a book in defence of his own conduct, with this title: "*A Faithful Exposition of the Errors of Michael Servetus; also teaching that Heretics must be restrained by the power of the sword.*" Socinus, an Italian, and his nephew of the same name are the chief founders of modern Arianism in a modified form. Poland was originally the principal seat of their heresy, and their first catechism was published at Cracow in 1574. On the tomb of the younger Socinus was inscribed in Latin this motto: "Luther unroofed Babylon, Calvin destroyed its walls, and Socinus its very foundations." For *Babylon* we may read *the faith of Christ.*

The Arian sect as revived by Socinus soon found its way into England. Many were burnt in the reigns of Edward VI., Elizabeth, and James I. At this day very many of the schismatical bodies are really Arian or Socinian; and Calvinism seems

naturally to lapse into it. In the Anglican Church during the last century the greatest advocates of this heresy were Whiston, and Dr. Samuel Clarke; and in Ireland Clayton bishop of Cork and Ross, afterwards of Clogher.

The Church at this day seems to have less to fear from open heresy than from the subtle, undermining influence of schism and internal divisions; though these are never wholly separable from heretical teaching. But sad as is the view which a churchman must take of the present course of events, and of the coldness and anarchy which too much prevail among those who name the holy name of Christ, he yet draws much encouragement from considering the progress of heresy and division in past time. The Church founded on the eternal rock of S. Peter's confession has till this hour withstood all the attacks of the powers of hell, and will in the end prevail over them all, as it has done in times of old; for the word of its Lord is "without variableness or shadow of turning," and He has promised that the "gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Heresies will disappear when He pleases, schisms will be united, and the novelties of a day will vanish, as they arose, like a dream. And if we are tempted to mourn that we may not live to see such a vision of peace and holy joy as a reunited Church would be, let us think of Athanasius and Basil, and many other fathers who slept in the Lord before He returned to visit His people. Such a vision, in real and unchanging beauty, they and we shall one day see, if we be found worthy, in the Jerusalem above.

JAN. 18.

## S. Prisca, Virgin and Martyr.

270 or 275.

LITTLE is known of this blessed martyr besides her name. She is commonly believed to have suffered during the reign of Claudius; but as there were two Roman emperors of that name, one in the first century, and the other in the third, the date of her martyrdom still remains uncertain. A general opinion is, that she suffered about the year 270, while Claudius II. was emperor; though the year 275 is also mentioned, and adopted by Butler as the probable date. In the martyrology of Galesinius, quoted by Tillemont, her father is called a man of consular family. Her name occurs in nearly all the western martyrologies. Some of them mention her as in her thirteenth year, and describe the tortures she underwent before her agony was finished by the sword. But no dependence can be placed on the truth of any of these particulars. It is surely sufficient for us to know that she certainly died for the love of Christ. And for her there is a faithful record of all kept in the Book of Life. An ancient church in Rome on the Aventine hill dedicated in her honour gives title to a cardinal, and is a station on the third day of Holy Week.

There was another S. Prisca, more commonly called Priscilla, who with her husband Aquila was a companion of the blessed Apostle Paul, and whom he salutes in his second epistle to S. Timothy under the name of Prisca. Priscilla and Aquila were Jews, and had been banished from Rome by Claudius on

that account. They then came to Corinth, where S. Paul first knew them, with whom they laboured for a time at the trade of tent-making. We next hear of them at Ephesus; and when S. Paul wrote his epistle to the Church in Rome, they had returned to the imperial city. Finally, when he wrote to S. Timothy on the eve of his martyrdom, they were once more at Ephesus. The sacred history is silent as to the causes of their frequent wanderings. They are believed to have ended their lives in Rome, but whether by martyrdom or not is unknown. That they were martyrs in will, if not in deed, S. Paul testifies in his epistle to the Romans [1].

Ye saintly choirs that round the regal seat,
Through Heaven's eternal palace, endless throng,
May we with voice for mortal not unmeet
Join your eternal song.

There, in their purple stole, are martyrs seen,
And virgins white who knew no earthly flame,
Like roses which with lilies blend between,
The victim's wreath to frame.

Hymns Par. Brev. p. 263.

---

JANUARY 20.

## S. Fabian, Bishop and Martyr.

250.

THE earliest notice which we have of this saint is that he came from the country to Rome during the vacancy of the see at the death of S. Anterus in 236. He was present at the election of a successor; and when all the brethren were assembled in the church,

[1] Chap. xvi. v. 4.

as Eusebius testifies, to choose one of their number to fill the see, they began to think of some persons of note among them, on one of whom their choice might fall. But suddenly a dove alighted on the head of the unknown stranger Fabian; and the whole assembly with one voice cried out that he was worthy to be bishop.

Little is known of his life; but S. Cyprian says that the glory of his death was answerable to the integrity of his government. He is said to have brought from Sardinia the body of S. Pontian Bishop of Rome, who had died in exile in that island in 235.

The Millenary of the city of Rome was celebrated during the pontificate of S. Fabian—an event which could have little interest in Christian eyes. Very different was the mission of S. Dionysius and his companions, whom Fabian sent into Gaul to convert the heathen to the faith. Their heroic labours were crowned with great success, and most of them ended their life by martyrdom.

In the year 249 Decius became emperor of Rome, and soon after began a cruel persecution of the Christians. During his short reign many holy martyrs received their crown, and among them S. Fabian, who suffered in the year 250. The priests and deacons of Rome wrote a letter to S. Cyprian, giving him an account of the happy death of their Bishop. He replied in a letter filled with the praise of the martyr, and with consoling words to his sorrowing children.

The name of S. Fabian, sometimes changed into Fabius or Flavian, occurs in very ancient martyrologies. The Greeks, as Tillemont says, keep his festival on the 5th of August. His relics are said to have been removed in 845 by Sergius II., Bishop of

Rome, from the cemetery of Callistus, where they had been buried, into the church of S. Martin.

With S. Fabian is usually joined Sebastian, a citizen of Narbonne in Gaul, born and educated in Milan. He served in the army for many years, and was advanced to a high rank in it by Dioclesian. After converting many to the faith, and encouraging others to confess Christ in the face of death, he received his crown in the year 288 on the 20th of January. Dioclesian, discovering that he was a Christian, condemned him to be shot at by archers, and he was left for dead. It is thus that he is generally represented by painters. Irene a holy widow going to bury him found him still alive, and took him home and nursed him. When the emperor heard of this, he ordered him to be beaten to death with clubs. His name is celebrated by S. Ambrose and in the early martyrologies, and his feast is kept throughout the whole Church. His remains were translated to Soissons in 826, and famed for miracles. In 1564 his tomb was profaned by the Huguenots. His name is borne by one of the seven churches in Rome appointed to be visited by pilgrims. They are the churches of S. John Lateran the cathedral church of Rome, of S. Peter in the Vatican, of S. Mary Major, and the Holy Cross of Jerusalem, within the city; and of S. Lawrence without the walls, of S. Paul on the Ostian road, and of S. Sebastian on the Appian road.

**Thus one doth vanquish strong-armed bands,**
**And o'er his torturers mightier rise,**
**Till e'en the judge astonished stands**
**With awe-struck eyes.**

Lord, make us Thine own soldiers true,
That we may gain the spirit pure,
And for Thy name, Thy cross in view,
All things endure.

Hymns Par. Brev. p. 282.

---

## JANUARY 21.

## S. Agnes, Virgin and Martyr.

304 or 305.

THIS youthful martyr suffered death in Rome in the year 304, or perhaps 305, during the cruel persecution of Dioclesian. She is mentioned in the sacramentary of S. Gregory as of high birth. Her parents seem to have been holy persons, who taught her the true faith of Christ in her childhood, and lived to see the reward of their pains in her blessed martyrdom. The ancient writers who have recorded it differ a little in the lesser details, but in the principal circumstances they all agree. When she was about thirteen years of age, the son of Symphronius the Prefect of Rome asked her in marriage; but she had already dedicated herself to her heavenly Lord by a vow of celibacy. The young man was a pagan; and when he discovered the love which Agnes bore to Christ, his anger was uncontrollable. He accused her of being a Christian; and she was brought before a judge, and ordered to burn incense to the gods. Persuasions and threats were tried in turn, but in vain. She was forcibly dragged to a smoking altar, and she stretched out her hand; but instead of throwing incense on the fire, she made the sign of the health-giving cross. By the orders of the judge, she was then exposed to public infamy, a barbarous sentence

frequently inflicted on those holy virgins who had consecrated their youth to Christ. But God interposed in a miraculous way for her preservation, as is often recorded in other instances; as, for example, in the case of S. Lucy. Agnes sang hymns of praise while her trial lasted; and a young man who ventured to approach near her was struck down by a flash as of lightning, and blinded; but at the prayer of the virgin his sight was restored.

When every means had been tried to overcome her constancy, she was condemned to die; and she went joyfully, and as if in triumph, to the place of execution. Her head was struck off at a blow, and her soul was united for ever to her heavenly Spouse. "And thus," says S. Ambrose, "she in whose tiny body there was hardly a place to receive the sword, had that in her which triumphed over it. At her age children cannot endure even the angry countenances of their parents, and are wont to cry at the prick of a needle. But in the bloody hands of executioners she was undaunted, and fearless amidst the rattling of chains. At last she yielded her body to the sword of the savage soldier, hardly knowing what it was to die, yet unmoved; scarcely able for the suffering, but ready for the victory; weak in the agony, and yet worthy of the crown. Bride never hastened to her nuptial chamber so joyously as Agnes to the place of death; her head adorned, not with plaited hair, but with Christ; crowned, not with flowers, but with holiness. All wept; she alone shed no tear. Marvellous was it to see her so prodigal of life when she had scarcely tasted it; yet she gave it up as if she had done with it. She stood, she prayed,

she bent her head. The headsman trembled and grew pale at another's danger, but she blenched not at her own. In one victim ye have a double martyrdom—of purity and of religion. A virgin she remained, and she attained the glory of a martyr[1]."

Her parents laid her body in a spot of ground where they had their burying-place, a little way out of the city, on the *Via Nomentana;* and thither the Christians resorted in great numbers to do honour to her memory. The pagans attacked them, and drove them away from the place amidst a shower of stones. A foster sister of the martyr, named Emerentiana, was killed, and her body was laid beside S. Agnes on the following night. Her sorrowing parents continued to visit her tomb in secret. One night they had a dream: they saw the blessed martyr coming to them, and a spotless lamb was at her side. She told them of the glory which she had attained in heaven. This appearance is commemorated in the Latin Church on the 28th of January, and hence she is generally represented with a lamb standing near her. Her martyrdom has been celebrated on the 21st of January, since the fourth age, and by the whole Catholic Church. The Greeks, besides the observance of this day, have also a commemoration of her on the 14th of June and the 5th of July. Part of her relics were carried by Theodosius the younger to Constantinople, and deposited in the church of S. Laurence. The first church dedicated in her honour was probably built by Constantia, daughter of the Emperor Constantine. Certain it is, that as early as the year 368 there was a church in Rome bearing her

[1] De Virginibus, lib. i. cap. 2 and 3.

name. Honorius, Bishop of Rome, about the year 630, built, or perhaps only rebuilt, the church where her body was preserved, on the Nomentan way, three miles from the city. It is now, as Tillemont mentions, served by Canons Regular. This church gives title to a cardinal, and every year on the feast of S. Agnes the abbat of St. Peter's *ad vincula* blesses in it at high mass two lambs, which are thence carried to the Pope, who again blesses them. After this they are sent to the nuns of S. Laurence in Panisperna, or sometimes to the Capucinesses, who make of their wool palliums, which the Pope blesses, and sends to patriarchs, primates, and metropolitans, as an emblem of the virtues which should distinguish them, and as a mark of their dignity. The pallium is a narrow strip of wool which goes round the shoulders, like the collar of an order of knighthood, and from which depend four other strips of the same breadth, one before and one behind, and one on either side. There are four purple crosses worked in it, and three golden needles to fasten it to the vestments. Its figure is still retained in the armorial bearings of the see of Canterbury. Cardinal Pole was the last archbishop of that see who received it from Rome. It is worn only in church, and on solemn occasions. In the Greek Church it is of a different form, and is worn by bishops, though in the Latin it has always been the badge of archbishops, with one or two exceptions.

S. Agnes has been mentioned with great honour by many of the Christian writers and saints of the early ages. S. Martin, Bishop of Tours in the end of the same century, assured his disciple Sulpicius

Severus, that he had sometimes seen visions of her bliss. S. Augustine, on the day of her feast, alludes to the various meanings of her name. "Blessed is the holy Agnes," says he, "whose passion we this day celebrate; for the maiden was indeed what she was called: for in Latin Agnes signifies a lamb; and in Greek it means pure. She was what she was called; and she was found worthy of her crown." Prudentius, the great Christian poet of Spain, sings her love to Christ, and her gentle constancy, in his praises of the martyrs: and S. Maximus of Tours, in the following century, pronounced a beautiful homily on her feast. She has ever been considered as a model of virgin grace, second only to the Blessed Virgin Mother of the Lord. And hence in elder times, when belief more readily than now embodied itself in deeds, her feast was observed with peculiar honour by the women of England. In the Constitutions of the Synod of Worcester in 1240, there is an injunction that women shall abstain from all servile work on the feasts of SS. Agnes, Margaret, Lucy, and Agatha[7]. In later and degenerate times, S. Agnes' day has been a favourite time for divining future matrimonial fortunes[8].

The next no form of earth :—
The palm adorns her hand, the crown her brow ;
She hides the stamp of her angelic birth,
And men on earth her beauty cannot know ;
But unto her 'tis given her God to see,
Making earth heaven, seraphic Chastity.

B. 236.

[7] Wilkin's Concilia, Mag. Brit. vol. i.
[8] Brand's Pop. Antiq. on the day.

JANUARY 22.

## S. Vincent, Deacon and Martyr.

304.

This most illustrious martyr of the Spanish Church was born at Saragossa in Aragon; the mother of martyrs, as Prudentius calls it. His parents are mentioned in his Acts, which are at least older than S. Augustine, in whose time they were publicly read in the Church of Hippo. The name of his father was Eutychius; and his mother Enola was a native of Osca or Huesca, which sometimes claims the honour of his birth. He was trained in the discipline of the Christian faith, by Valerius bishop of Saragossa, and was in due time ordained to the office of deacon. The bishop was a man of venerable piety, but laboured under an impediment in his speech. He therefore devoted himself to prayer and contemplation, and entrusted the care of teaching to S. Vincent, whom he also appointed his principal or archdeacon.

Datian was then governor of Spain under Dioclesian and Maximinian, and had already distinguished himself by his cruelty to the Christians. The imperial edict for the seizure of the clergy had just been published in the end of the year 303; in which the laity were not included till the following year. Valerius and his deacon were accordingly loaded with chains, and carried to Valentia, where the governor then was. The pains of hunger were added to their sufferings, in the hope of subduing their fortitude. When they were brought before Datian, he first tried the effect of mild language, and

promises of reward if they would obey the orders of the emperors, and sacrifice to the gods. He reminded Valerius of the influence which his episcopal dignity gave him; and to Vincent he represented the honour of his family, and the sweet joys of youth which still lay before him. But the confessors of Christ were not to be thus moved. Valerius being unable from his infirmity to reply to the artful persuasions of the tempter, Vincent made a noble profession of the faith in the name of them both. The bishop was condemned to exile, where he seems afterwards to have finished his course by martyrdom; and Vincent was remanded to prison, thence to pass by a more painful but a speedier way to his crown.

His body was stretched upon the rack, and cruelly torn with iron hooks: but no torture could shake his resolution, or disturb the calm which sat upon his countenance. He defied the utmost efforts of his tormentors; and when they began to grow weary, Datian ordered them to be beaten, suspecting that they spared the martyr. But the governor himself was at last moved to a faint pity by the miserable spectacle, and entreated him to purchase his deliverance by at least giving up the Christian books. Vincent still continuing firm, was taken from the rack, and led to a more terrible torture called the *Question*. It was an iron frame, with bars running across it, sharp as scythes, and underneath a fire was kindled, which made the whole frame red hot. To this fearful agony the martyr walked with a willing step, and even went before the executioners. And as he lay bound upon the bed of torture, his eyes were fixed on heaven, his lips moved as if in prayer, and a

peaceful smile would sometimes pass across his countenance. No cruelty was spared that diabolical ingenuity could invent, but the love of Christ surpassed the wrath of man, and won the day.

When the malice of his enemies could do no more, he was carried back to prison, and laid in a dark dungeon, strewed with broken potsherds which allowed his wounded body no rest. His feet too were fastened in the stocks. But God was mindful of His servant, and sent His angels to comfort him; bestowing a foretaste of his reward while his trial was yet unfinished. His cell was illuminated with the light of heaven; his bonds were loosed; and the floor of his prison seemed to be strewed with flowers. The martyr and his celestial visitants sang hymns together, and the unwonted sound astonished the jailor. He looked into the cell; and, overpowered by what he saw and heard, confessed the power of God, and the truth of the Christian faith. When Datian heard of it, he shed tears of rage; but finding it was useless to continue his cruelty, he gave orders that some repose should be allowed to the martyr. His motives for this act of clemency are variously represented. Perhaps he only meant to recruit the strength of Vincent, that he might endure further tortures; or perhaps he feared that if he expired under them, the Christian faith might be exalted in the eyes of the people by his constancy. But whatever was the policy of Datian, God overruled it, to obtain for His blessed servant an easy departure. The scattered remnant of Christians gathered round him, and tended him with anxious care. They provided a soft bed, on which he was no sooner laid,

than he yielded up his soul to the Lord, on the 22nd of January, 304.

The rage of the governor followed his poor remains. His body was cast out into a field, to become the prey of wild beasts and birds: and, to add further indignities to it, it was taken out in a boat, and thrown into the sea. During the night it was washed ashore; and at last was privately buried by some Christians in an humble chapel near Valentia. When the fury of the persecution had ceased, it was removed with great honour, and buried under the altar of the principal church. Some of his relics are reported by S. Gregory of Tours to have been carried by Childebert, King of France in 542, to Paris, and enshrined in a stately church which he built there. In 863 part of his body was translated to the Abbey of Castres, in Languedoc; it was burnt by the Huguenots in the sixteenth century. The rest of the body of S. Vincent was transported from Valentia by sea to Lisbon, when the Moors invaded Spain. This translation is commemorated in Portugal on the 15th of September.

The feast of S. Vincent is observed in every part of the Catholic Church. The Greeks keep it on the 11th of November. In France many abbeys and churches are dedicated to God in his honour: as, for example, the cathedral churches of Chalons sur Sône, of Mâcon, of Viviers, and of S. Malo. Some of these may have been originally consecrated in memory of S. Vincent of Agen, though the other S. Vincent is now their patron.

S. Augustine has celebrated this glorious martyr in five sermons, pronounced on the anniversaries of his

feast. Prudentius also has preserved the history of his unexampled sufferings. He is one of the few early martyrs whose Acts are quite authentic. They may be traced to a contemporaneous age.

O painful lesson, written in Thy blood!
To follow Thee! O lesson full of pain!
And yet not painful if it is most good,
The pain shall pass away, the good remain.

Seek we soft beds to sleep on or to die?
With iron nails upon Thy torturing bed,
Thy naked limbs were viewed in agony;
And mockery stood by Thy dying head.

Still as I gaze on Thee my tears will swell,
The things of which I glory drop away,
Nothing but of my sorrows would I tell,
So many are my sins, so short my day.

Baptistery, p. 260.

# FEBRUARY.

---

## FEBRUARY 3.

## S. Blasius, Bishop and Martyr.

### 316.

S. Blasius was Bishop of Sebaste, a city of Cappadocia, in the Lesser Asia. He spent a great part of his time in retirement on a hill not far from the city, whither he withdrew, after the duties of his office were finished, to be alone with God. During the persecution of the Christians in the reign of Dioclesian, he lay concealed for some time in this retreat, but was at last taken and brought before Agricolaus, the governor of the province, and, confessing himself a Christian, was thrown into prison. After enduring many tortures he received the crown of martyrdom in the beginning of the fourth century. Some historians refer this event to the year 316, under the reign of Licinius. Seven holy women and two young children suffered at the same time. His feast is celebrated by the Greek Church on the 11th February. He is often represented as holding in his hand a comb of iron, probably an instrument of his torture.

The observance of this feast in England was marked by several curious ceremonies, whose origin is now hidden in doubt and obscurity. Not long ago it was a custom in many parts of England (and may

be so still), to light up fires on the hills on S. Blayse's night; perhaps for no better reason than the similarity of his name to the word "blaze[1]." But this explanation can only be received in the absence of any more probable. The following entries in the Northumberland Household Book refer to another singular custom which was practised on the feast of this saint:—

"Item. My Lordis offering accustomede yerly upon Saint Blayes Day to be sett in his Lordschipp's Candill to offer at Hye Mas, if his Lordschyp kepe Chapell iiij d.

"Item. My Laidis offeringe accustomede yerely upon Saint Blayes Day to be sett in her Candill to offer at the Hye Mas, to be paid owt of my Lordis coffures if sche be at my Lordis fyndynge and not at hir own—iiij d.

"Item. My Lord useth & accustomyth yerly upon Saynt Blays Day to cause to be delyveride for the offerynge of my Lordis Sone and Heire the Lord Percy to sett in his Candill jd. And for every of my yonge masters my Lord's yonger sonnes to sett in their candills after jd for every of them for their offerings this said day iij d[2]."

It was a universal practice to offer candles on the preceding day, hence called *Candlemas;* but it is difficult to account for that ceremony being used on the day after, for the feast of the Purification has no octave. Hospinian, in his book on the *Origin of*

[1] Dr. Percy's note in Antiq. Rep.

[2] Antiq. Rep. vol. iv. p. 249.

*the Christian Feasts*, p. 36, says, that "on S. Blasius' day, at mass, a candle is offered in remembrance of the charity of a certain Christian widow who brought meat to the saint in prison, with a candle and a loaf of bread; and that S. Blasius requested her to offer a candle annually in church, promising that it should be well with her if she did so, and with as many as should follow her example." Honorius Augustodunensis, in his *Gemma Animæ*, gives the same account in these words: "The custom which prevails among the faithful, of kindling lights in their houses, and of giving alms on the feast of S. Blasius, took its rise from the martyr's own desire. For the blessed bishop, while he lay in prison enduring every kind of hardship for Christ's sake, was supplied with food and light by a certain poor woman; whom he instructed after his decease to burn a light in memory of him, and to ask alms for his sake; and promised that she should never want. And, when by his passion he had departed to Christ, she did as he had taught her, and soon began to prosper; and from her example the custom spread throughout the Churches." Butler says that S. Blasius' day is observed with great festivity by the manufacturers of wool in the city of Norwich. The origin of this custom, too, is obscure.

"The ancient Christians," says Wheatley, "used abundance of lights on the Purification, (which is another name for Candlemas,) both in their churches and processions, in remembrance of our blessed Saviour's being this day declared by old Simeon "to be a Light to lighten the Gentiles;" which portion

of Scripture is for that reason appointed for the Gospel of the day." The use of lights in churches, and at certain solemn offices, is very ancient, and is universally enjoined throughout Christendom.

"We carry lights in our hands," says Bishop Sparrow[1], quoting from S. Bernard, "first, to signify that our light should shine before men; secondly, we do this day especially in memory of the wise virgins, of whom the Blessed Virgin is the chief, that went to meet their Lord with their lamps lit and burning: and from this usage, and the many lights set up in the Church this day, it is called Candlemas Day: because our works should be all done in the holy fire of charity; therefore the candles are lit with holy fire."

Lighted candles also represent the two natures of Christ, by the union of which in one person He is the true Light of the world. And this seems to be the view which is taken of the emblem of lights in the injunctions of Edward VI., which enjoin "two lights on the high altar before the Sacrament, for the signification that Christ is the very true Light of the world." These injunctions are referred to, as of paramount authority, in the rubric at the beginning of the Book of Common Prayer.

Lights also recal to our recollection those times of persecution when the early Christians in Rome assembled in catacombs by night for the celebration of the divine mysteries, and when their altar was often the tombstone of a martyr. They may also remind us, that the brightest and most joyous of our

[1] *Rationale* of Common Prayer Book.

earthly days is as twilight compared with the day which will ere long dawn upon us—the day of the Son of man—for which the Church is ever watching; when "the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, when the Lord bindeth up the breach of His people, and healeth the stroke of their wound[1]."

"At evening time there shall be light,"—
'Twas said of old,—'tis wrought to-day:
Now, with the stoled priest in sight,
The perfumed embers quivering bright,
Ere yet the ceiling's spangled height
The glory catch of the new kindled ray!

A voice not loud, but thrilling clear,
On hearts prepared, falls benign:—
"I am the world's true Light: who hear,
And follow Me, no darkness fear,
Nor waning eve, nor changing year,
The light of Life is theirs: pure Light of Life divine!"

Lyra Apostolica, p. 74.

---

FEBRUARY 5.

## S. Agatha, Virgin and Martyr.

251.

The honour of being the birth-place of S. Agatha is claimed by Catania and Palermo, in Sicily. The probabilities in favour of either are nearly equally divided, though there seems to be a slight superiority

[1] Isaiah xxx. 26.

in the claims of Catania. It certainly was the scene of her martyrdom, which took place during the persecution of Decius in 251, as all her Acts testify.

She was the daughter of an illustrious and wealthy house in Sicily, and was famed for her beauty and her gentle and amiable manners. But her love was consecrated to God from her very earliest youth. Quintianus, the Consular of Sicily, as the governor was then called, admired her exceedingly, and the holy virgin retired to Palermo to avoid his importunities. As it often happened in those days of heathen cruelty, his love was turned into hatred when he discovered that she was a Christian. She was seized and brought to Catania; and all the way thither she could only weep and pray to the Lord to strengthen her for the conflict which awaited her. Every means was tried during the space of a month to prevail on her to forget her vow; but she was supported by continual prayer, and at last came off victorious from this lingering martyrdom.

She was privately examined before Quintian as to her faith, and confessed Christ with undaunted firmness, declaring the service of the Lord Jesus to be the highest nobility, and the truest freedom. She was then sent to prison, to which she went joyfully, recommending herself to God, and entreating His aid. The day after, she was tortured on the rack, and suffered with calmness and constancy. When her breasts were cut off, she mildly reproached the inhuman Quintian with the remembrance of his own infancy, and with the tenderness of his mother. She was then led back to prison, and all sustenance and medical aid were denied her; but on the following

night she saw in a vision the Prince of the Apostles enter her cell, and in the name of his blessed Master he cured her wounds. This vision is commemorated in a preface in the Missal of Milan attributed to S. Ambrose.

In four days after, Agatha was again tortured, and on being remanded once more to prison, she raised her hands and eyes towards heaven, and thanked her Lord for having given her strength to endure every torment, and for having taken from her all love of the world, and of this passing life. And she prayed that, if it might be, He would now take her to Himself to enjoy His abundant mercy. Her prayer was heard, and she sweetly fell asleep in the Lord. The people buried her with great honour. Quintian no sooner heard of her death than he hastened to confiscate her goods. But the anger of Almighty God followed him, and he was drowned in crossing a river.

"Of the love of the heavenly life," says S. Gregory, "Solomon well says, Love is strong as death. For as death destroys the body, so the desire of eternal life kills the love of earthly things. For not even that saint whose birth-day we this day celebrate could have died in her body for her Lord unless she had first died in mind to all earthly desires. For her soul being raised up to the height of virtue, despised tortures and contemned every reward. She stood before armed kings and governors, stronger than the striker, higher than the judge. What shall we, rude and enervated as we are, say when we see maidens going to the heavenly kingdom through the sword; we whom anger overcomes, whom pride puffs up, whom ambition disturbs, and luxury pollutes.

If we cannot attain that celestial kingdom through the war of persecutions, let this be our shame, that we will not follow God through peace. For to none of us does He say at this day, Die for Me; but only, Kill in thee all forbidden desires. We, then, who will not in peace subdue the desires of the flesh, how shall we be able in war to conquer the flesh itself for the Lord's sake?"

Many miracles are said to have been performed at the tomb, and by the relics of S. Agatha. Tillemont says that the most difficult to doubt are those which are related by Maurice bishop of Catania in the twelfth century. The saint is recorded to have appeared twice in visions—once to S. Lucy, and again to S. Digna, a holy virgin of Cordova, to whom she foretold her approaching martyrdom in 853. This is reported by S. Eulogus, who lived at the same time.

The feast of S. Agatha is observed on the 5th of February, in all parts of the Catholic Church. Her name occurs in the canon of the Mass of the Latin Church; the first of five virgin saints enumerated in *Nobis quoque peccatoribus*. Her Acts are at best but of doubtful authority. Her remains were transported to Constantinople in 1040, by the Greek commander who drove the Saracens out of Sicily. They were restored to Catania in 1127. Some martyrologies mention this translation on the 17th of August.

About the year 500 Symmachus, Bishop of Rome, built a church in her honour, near that city. It remained till the middle of the eleventh century, and is now in ruins. There is a cemetery called by her

name near its site. There was also a church in her honour in Constantinople.

"Virginity is a life of Angels," says bishop Jeremy Taylor[1], "the enamel of the soul, the huge advantage of religion, the great opportunity for the retirements of devotion; and being empty of cares, it is full of prayers; being unmingled with the world, it is apt to converse with God; and by not feeling the warmth of a too forward and indulgent nature, flames out with holy fires, till it be burning like the cherubim, and the most ecstasied order of holy and unpolluted spirits. . . And therefore it is more excellent than the married life in that degree in which it hath greater religion, and a greater mortification, a less satisfaction of natural desires, and a greater fulness of the spiritual; and just so is it to expect that little coronet or special reward which God hath prepared, extraordinary and besides the great crown of all faithful souls, for those who follow the Virgin Lamb for ever."

This is the doctrine of S. Paul, and after him of all the fathers and saints of the Catholic Church. And in ages past its blessed fruits have been the glorious abbeys and monasteries which covered the face of Christendom, beneath whose mouldering ruins the dust of countless numbers of holy men and women now awaits a joyful resurrection. "Every one," saith the Saviour, "who hath forsaken houses, and brethren, and sisters, and father, and mother, *and wife*, *and children*, *and lands*, for my sake, shall

[1] Holy Living, chap. ii. sect. 3.

receive an hundredfold in this life, and in the world to come life everlasting."

They say, who know the life divine,
And upward gaze with eagle eyne,
That by each golden crown on high,
Rich with celestial jewelry,
Which for our Lord's redeemed is set,
There hangs a radiant coronet,
All gemmed with pure and living light,
Too dazzling for a sinner's sight,
Prepared for virgin souls, and them
Who seek the martyr's diadem.

Christian Year, p. 124.

---

FEBRUARY 14.

## S. Valentine, Bishop and Martyr.

270.

S. VALENTINE was a priest of the Roman Church; and was put in chains by the Emperor Claudius II., for his religion. Calpurnius, the prefect of the city, who had charge of him, entrusted him to the care of Asterius, his chief officer. Valentine used his opportunity, and preached the faith to his guard, and restored her sight to his adopted daughter. Asterius was converted and baptized, with his whole family, and confirmed by a bishop named Callistus. Claudius hearing this, condemned S. Valentine to be beaten with clubs and afterwards beheaded. He suffered on the Flaminian way, on the 14th of February, 270.

"In the glorious agony of this blessed martyr," says the author under the name of S. Augustin, "two

things are chiefly to be considered by us; the hardened cruelty of the torturer, and the invincible patience of the martyr. The cruelty of the torturer, that we may hate it; the patience of the martyr, that we may imitate it. Hear the Psalmist inveighing against the malice of the ungodly: 'Be not envious of the wicked; for like stubble they are quickly dried up.' But that patience must be shown to sinners, hear the apostle persuading us: 'Patience is needful for you, that ye may receive the promises.'"

Julius Bishop of Rome, about eighty years afterwards, built a church on the place where S. Valentine had suffered: and about the middle of the seventh century, Theodorus built a church in his honour, near Ponte Mole. It was enlarged and beautified by succeeding pontiffs, but is now in ruins. The gate *del popolo* sometime also bore the name of the saint.

His relics are said to be distributed in various places in Italy and the Low Countries, and at Melun in France.

S. Valentine is sometimes confounded with a martyr of the same name and age, who was bishop of Terni, the Interamnæ of the Romans.

Train Thou us, Lord, with Thee to die,
  That we from death may rise,
Our steps on earth, our hearts on high,
  Our treasure in the skies,
Where God Triune doth reign for ever nigh.

Par. Brev. 280.

---

The custom of writing love letters on S. Valentine's day is of remote antiquity. Various accounts

are given of its origin. Some antiquarians trace it to the ancient *Lupercalia*, the feast of *Pan* and *Juno Februata*[1], when the names of a number of young women were put into an urn and drawn by lot by the young men, each of whom devoted himself to the person whose name he had drawn while the feast lasted. And it is supposed, but perhaps not on very good authority, that in early times the Christian pastors attempted to give to this ceremony a religious character by using the names of certain saints, and by fixing the feast on S. Valentine's day. It is certain, that in the seventeenth century such a change was made in his diocese by S. Francis of Sales.

A reason frequently given by the poets[2] is, that as at this season of the year the birds choose their mates, so young persons should do the same.

But perhaps the most probable reason, and certainly the most interesting, is that it was customary in the middle ages, during the time of the carnival, which usually happened about S. Valentine's Day, for a great number of knights and ladies to assemble at the various courts of Europe; and feasts and tournaments were held for their amusement. And at those times each lady made choice of a knight, who devoted himself to her service for a whole year. One duty which he frequently had to perform was to address verses to her full of tenderness, which he wrote as a matter of course, without necessarily feeling all that he expressed. The earliest poetical valentines known to exist are those written by Charles duke of

[1] See Fosbrooke's Encycl. Antiqu.

[2] Douce's illustrations of Shakspeare, vol. ii. 252.

Orleans, father of King Charles XII. of France, which are preserved in the Royal Library in the British Museum. He was taken prisoner at the battle of Agincourt in 1415, and remained a captive in England for twenty-five years. The following is a specimen of these letters, in old French:—

A ce jour de Saint Valentin
Que chascun doit choisir son per
Amours demourrai-je non per
Sans partir à vostre butin ?
A mon reveillier au matin
Je n'y aye cessé de penser
A ce jour de Saint Valentin.

When the feast of S. Valentine happened to fall on the same day as Ash Wednesday, the knights and the ladies seem to have assembled in the afternoon, and to have devoted the morning to their religious duties.

Saint Valentin quant vous venez
En caresme au commencement,
Receu ne serez vrayement
Ainsi que accoustumé avez.

Saint Valentin dit, Veez me ça,
Et apporte pers à choysir :
Viegne qui y devra venir
C'est la coustume de pieça.

Quand le jour des cendres, hola,
Respond, auquel doit-on faillir ?

Saint Valentin dit, Veez me ça,
Et apporte pers à choysir.
Au fort au matin convendra
En devotion se tenir,
Et après disner à loysir
Choysisse qui choisir vouldra ;

Saint Valentin dit, Veez me ça,
Et apporte pers à choysir.

A similar custom [1] of choosing valentines occurs in many parts of France, among the young people, on the evening of the first Sunday in Lent.

Madame Royale [2], daughter of King Henry IV. of France, built a palace at Turin, which she called *the Valentin;* and gave an annual entertainment in it, when the ladies chose their knights for the year by lot, except herself, who claimed the privilege of selecting her own. At every ball during the year each knight or *Valentin* presented his lady with a bouquet of flowers, and each lady or *Valentine* furnished the horse's trappings of her knight at all tournaments, and the prizes which he obtained became hers.

There is a letter extant [3], dated 1476, which seems to have been a real and not a feigned love-letter, in which the lady addresses her lover as her *Valentine.* But the whole history of this subject is obscure; and indeed the custom is fast descending into the oblivion which is the fate of more venerable and useful remains of antiquity. Nevertheless, as it recals the manners of a simpler and less pedantic age, it must ever be interesting, even though its continuance cannot now be defended, when the simplicity which was its safeguard, and of which it was the token, has disappeared.

[1] Note in Duchet's edition of Rabelais, vol. i. 393.
[2] Menage, Diction. Etymol.: *voce Valentin.*
[3] Fenn's Paston Letters, vol. ii. 211.

# MARCH.

## MARCH 1.

## S. David, Archbishop.

### 544.

S. David, or Dewi, the glory of the British Church in the sixth age, was born in the year 462, according to the best authorities. The Saxons had then overrun the greater part of England; and Vortigern the British king had been fain to purchase his life and liberty from them by surrendering the provinces which included the modern counties of Essex, Sussex, Surrey, Norfolk, and Suffolk. The Church also was cruelly persecuted by the pagan invaders.

The birth of David had been foretold thirty years before by S. Patrick the Apostle of Ireland, as he passed through Wales on his mission. It is reported that it was revealed to him by an angel. Regarding this and some other extraordinary circumstances, as in the history of S. David, Collier remarks [1], "Some of them may very probably be true; for in the infancy of a Church miracles are more necessary, and therefore may be supposed much more frequent, than afterwards." The wonderful prediction of his birth by an angel was commemorated in the collect

[1] Eccl. Hist. B. i. p. 58.

on his feast in the older office of the church of Sarum.

His father was the son of the king of Ceretica, a province of Wales, now Cardigan; and his mother's name was Nonnita or Melaria. The infant David was baptized by S. Albæus, an Irish bishop of Munster or Cashel, who had been a disciple in Italy of S. Hilary of Arles. He was educated by his mother at Hên Vynyw or Henmeneu—vetus Menevia—and his whole time was devoted to sacred learning. Having passed unspotted through the dangerous period of his early youth, he was at length advanced by the various grades to the priesthood. He soon after retired into the island of Vecta[1], to enjoy the instruction of S. Paulinus, a disciple of S. Germanus bishop of Auxerre, who lived there in great seclusion from the world. David remained a long time with him, and besides a constant attendance on his teaching, he went about preaching and founding monasteries.

When he returned to his own country he founded a religious house in the Vallis Rosina, afterwards called Ross. Boia, a pagan nobleman who lived near, did all he could to deter the holy brotherhood from their purpose; and both he and his wife used every annoyance and temptation that they could devise, but in vain. The Saint encouraged his spiritual children to persevere in their life of self-denial. He devoted himself wholly to the training of his monks, and mingled little in public affairs. In a little time his house became very famous, and many

[1] Perhaps the *Isle of Wight,* though *Vectis* is the proper name for it.

rich and powerful men left their estates and retired into it to end their days. Their rule seems to have been nearly the same as that of S. Antony and the Egyptian monks. The brethren earned their livelihood by rural labour; and spent their leisure time in silent study, and in meditation on divine things. In the evening they all left their work at the sound of the bell, and went into the church, where they remained till the stars appeared. They then partook of a frugal supper, in the refectory, consisting of bread and herbs and salt, with a little milk and water. Then they went to rest till cock-crowing, when they rose to prayer, and continued in the church till daylight dawned. Perfect obedience to the superior was enjoined, even in the smallest trifle; and frequent confession was also practised. All novices were subjected to a severe discipline and trial in order to test their resolution to conform to the rule.

"At that time," says Giraldus Cambrensis, "the Church of God in Wales flourished and was honoured with many fruits. In many places monasteries were founded, and congregations of faithful religious were gathered with holy devotion under the obedience of Christ. To all, David was a mirror, and an example. He taught his children in Christ by word, and still more powerfully by example. He was instruction to those who heard him; a guide to the religious; life to the needy; protection to the orphan; the stay of widows; the father of the young; to monks a rule; and to seculars a pattern; and all things to all men, that God might be glorified[1]." Another ancient

[1] Vita S. Davidis.

historian has preserved a portrait of the holy man: "He was about six feet in height; and had an amiable and pleasant countenance, and a distinguished appearance; he was easy of access, and of great eloquence in speech."

The Pelagian heresy had before this time made its way into Britain. Nearly a century before, its progress had been checked, but it seems to have gained new strength in the beginning of the sixth age; and in 519 a synod of Welsh bishops, abbats, and clergy met at Brevi in Ceretica to condemn it anew. Many noble and honourable lay persons were also present at the consultations. The principal leaders were Daniel, first bishop of Bangor, and Dubritius, who had been consecrated bishop of Llandaff in 436, and removed to the see of Caerleon in 492. According to Geoffrey of Monmouth, the bishop of Caerleon was then primate of Britain, and legate of the see of Rome. Dubritius was then a very old man, and after crowning King Arthur in 516, he had retired into the island of Bardsey, to be more at leisure to devote himself to continual prayer. But he was roused by the dangers which threatened the Church, and repaired to the synod at Brevi. He died in the same year, and was buried in the cathedral church of Llandaff.

During the sittings S. Paulinus reminded the fathers that the holy ascetic David was not among them; and they immediately sent to bring him from his solitude to the synod. This was not done without great difficulty; so unwilling was the humble man to thrust himself into the notice of the world. It is even said that Dubritius and Daniel had to go

themselves and fetch him. And when he was come at last he made a noble defence of the Catholic Faith, and convinced many among the laity who were inclined to the novelties of Pelagius. The marvellous display of His power with which God was pleased to show His approval of His servant may be found recorded in the larger histories of his life. The aged Dubritius prevailed on the synod to appoint him his successor in Caerleon; but no entreaties could persuade him to leave his beloved Menevia; and it was at length agreed, with the sanction of King Arthur and the synod, that he should be allowed to transfer the see thither from Caerleon. S. David seems to have then made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, where he received his episcopal consecration from the Patriarch.

Ten years afterwards he held a synod at Victoria, which confirmed the statutes of Brevi, and enacted several new ones. All record of these is now lost; —though David was at great pains to have copies of them made for every church, and even assisted with his own hand. Little is known of the other events of his episcopate, except that he sometimes visited Ireland, and sent many of his monks thither, who became afterwards renowned for their sanctity, and were advanced to the highest offices in the Church.

The year of his decease is doubtful. Some historians say that he lived to the very great age of a hundred and forty-seven years, and died in 609. But Ussher, and with him the best authorities, say that he died in 544, aged eighty-two years. As his last sickness increased angelic voices might frequently be heard in his chamber, and many gracious visits were vouchsafed

to him, from his future companions in glory. On the last Sunday which he spent in this world, he preached to his people and to his clergy, and consecrated the Adorable Body of the Lord, with which he strengthened himself for his agony. And having finished the divine office he gave them his blessing, bidding them farewell, and saying that on the second day after he should depart from the world to the Lord. "The whole of the remaining time," says the historian, "was spent by him in heavenly communings and in the enjoyment of divine solaces." As the hour approached, the Lord Jesus seemed to come to him, and was welcomed by the blessed man with joy, and with many tears. And as He was going away, he cried, "Lord, take me after Thee!" And so saying he departed. His decease was made known at the same hour to S. Kentigern, commonly called S. Mungo, bishop of Glasco, his dear friend, who saw his spirit carried up by angels to heaven. His body was buried in the church of Menevia, and the name was afterwards changed to S. David's in honour of him.

Menevia, or S. David's, was for many ages the metropolitan church of Wales, and exempted from the jurisdiction of Canterbury. There were seven sees which owed it allegiance,—Exeter, Bath, Hereford, Llandaff, Bangor, S. Asaph, and Fernes in Ireland; though some historians have increased their number to twelve. It was first subjected to Canterbury in the reign of King Henry I. by Pope Eugenius in 1148. But even after that, the Welsh bishops received their consecration from the archbishop of Menevia till 1151, when Bernard a Norman,

and chaplain to King Henry I. was appointed to the see; and since his time the metropolitan authority has been vested in Canterbury. The title of archbishop of S. David's is said to have been lost when Sampson, the twenty-fourth or twenty-fifth bishop in descent from S. David, was constrained by his clergy to sail into Brittany to avoid a deadly epidemic which then afflicted Wales. He carried his pall, the sign of metropolitan dignity, with him, and deposited it in the church of Dol, where it was left. And hence the metropolitan title was lost to S. David's. But if so, the pall must then have belonged to particular churches, and could not, as in later ages, have been a personal distinction. For no metropolitan within the Roman Obedience can now exercise his authority in a new province without a renewal of the pall. And the loss of the pall itself could not now deprive an archbishop of his title or prerogative, which might be so easily restored by the grant of another. Perhaps the poverty of the see, which other historians allege as a reason, is more probable. The clergy of Dol are said to have claimed exemption from the jurisdiction of their former Metropolitan the archbishop of Tours, in right of the pall which had been brought to their church. And this claim was not finally settled till 1198 by Pope Innocent III[1].

The present diocess of S. David's includes chiefly the shires of Pembroke, Cardigan, Carmarthen, and Brecknock, with some churches and chapels in the

[1] Fleury, B. lxxv. c. 19, gives another and a more credible account of the origin of the dispute between Dol and Tours.

neighbouring counties of Radnor, Hereford, Glamorgan, and Montgomery[1].

Pilgrimages were frequently made to the shrine of S. David. In 1079 William the Conqueror visited it; and so did also King Henry II. in 1171. And in 1284 King Edward I. and his queen Eleanor arrived there on pilgrimage, on the day after the Feast of S. Katharine, being Sunday. The church and the town were much exposed by their situation to plunder and sacrilege. The Saxons and piratical freebooters often made descents upon it, and carried away much valuable booty. "In 1087 the shrine of S. David was stolen from the church, and the jewels and treasures being taken away, it was restored."

The present cathedral was begun by bishop Peter de Leia in 1180, and was enlarged and beautified from time to time till the beginning of the sixteenth century. The ancient palace of the bishops, now in ruins, was built by bishop Gower, Chancellor of England, who died in 1347. It was preserved in good repair till the year 1536, when bishop Barlow was translated hither from S. Asaph. He used his influence with Cromwell Earl of Essex, the lay Vicar-general of England under King Henry VIII., after the separation from the Roman Obedience, to have the see removed to Carmarthen; and not prevailing, he did all that was in his power to render the episcopal palace at S. David's uninhabitable for any future bishop. He stripped off the lead from it, and from one of his manorial castles, and sold it for his own benefit. In the following year he was trans-

[1] Brown Willis.

lated to Bath and Wells, and during the sixteen years of his episcopate there, he reduced the revenues of that see to one half. On the accession of Queen Mary he fled to Germany; but was appointed bishop of Chichester in 1559, and died in 1568. No fewer than five of his daughters were married to English bishops in the reign of Elizabeth. As an instance of the intimate connexion between the love of religious novelty and the love of Church plunder, this bishop was accused before Cromwell as early as the year 1536 of publicly teaching doctrines utterly destructive of the first principles of the Christian faith [1].

The first of March is annually commemorated in the Principality of Wales as a holiday; and from very ancient times the custom has prevailed of wearing a leek, just as in Ireland a shamrock is worn on S. Patrick's day in honour of that saint. Antiquarians are much divided as to the origin of this custom in Wales. Some trace it to a victory gained over the Saxons, under the guidance of S. David, who gave the Britons this badge of fellowship. Others suppose that the victory may have been gained in a field of leeks; while a third reason has been found, in the commemoration of the abstinence and poverty of S. David and his monks. But the custom is perhaps too ancient and too local to admit of more satisfactory explanation. The Welsh stories of the corpse-candles are also connected with S. David's name. They are only seen in his diocess; and popular rumour attributes it to his intercession, that

[1] See Strype's Eccl. Mem. under year 1536, and Appendix. Dugdale's Monast: *Wells* and *S. David's*.

the descendants of his ancient people are privileged to obtain an insight into the mysteries of the unseen world.

> Say, who is he, in deserts seen?
> Or at the twilight hour?
> Of garb austere, and dauntless mien,
> Measured in speech, in purpose keen,
> Calm, as in heaven he had been,
> Yet blithe when perils lower.
>
> My holy mother made reply,
> "Dear child, it is my priest.
> The world has cast me forth, and I
> Dwell with wild earth, and gusty sky;
> He bears to men my mandates high,
> And works my sage behest.
>
> Another day, dear child, and thou
> Shalt join his sacred band.
> Ah! well I deem thou shrinkest now
> From urgent rule and severing vow;
> Gay hopes flit round, and light thy brow;—
> Time hath a taming hand."

Lyra Apostolica, p. 212.

In the end of the fourth century, or very early in the fifth, the Pelagian heresy made its appearance. It spread rapidly over the whole of Christendom, and was not finally subdued for nearly two centuries, if indeed any heresy can be said to be entirely extinguished, even at this day. Pelagius the heresiarch was a native of Wales; his British name seems to have been Morgan. He was a man of good understanding, and affected a peculiar sanctity. He taught publicly in Rome for a time, before he gave his doctrines to the world; and made many disciples, of whom the chief were Celestius and Julianus. The

principal tenets of his party were that Adam would have died whether he had sinned or not; that the rest of mankind receive no disadvantage from Adam's sin; and that new-born infants are in the condition of Adam before the Fall. Also that the disobedience and death of Adam are not necessary causes of death to his descendants, any more than the resurrection of Christ insures a general resurrection of the dead; and that the grace and assistance of God are not necessary for the performance of every moral act; but that human nature possesses in itself the necessary power to fulfil the law, and earn eternal life. These and some other doctrines which may be drawn from them were condemned in many provincial councils of the Church; particularly in that of Diospolis in Palestine in 415, when Pelagius was present, but saved himself from excommunication by retracting his opinions for the time. His disciple Celestius was also condemned in the Council of Carthage.

When this heresy appeared, S. Austin had just brought the Donatist controversy to a successful issue; and he turned the energies of his mind to meet the new danger. He attacked it in his sermons and in his writings, and one treatise on *Nature and Grace* among others he devoted to the refutation of the novel doctrines. In 418 the Emperor Honorius published an edict against them; and Zozimus, Bishop of Rome, pronounced a public sentence of condemnation, which the bishops of the whole Church approved and signed, except eighteen who were deposed. The progress of the heresy in Britain deserves more particular notice. It is supposed to have been

carried into Britain by Agricola,—a relation of Severianus a Pelagian bishop in Gaul,—who was probably obliged to leave that country when Valentinian III. in 425 published a severe rescript against the defenders of the heresy. Before long the country was filled with it, and at the request of the British Church, two learned defenders of the faith came over from Gaul in 429 to arrest its progress. These were S. Germanus bishop of Auxerre, and Lupus bishop of Troyes. It is doubted whether Germanus was not sent into Britain as the legate of Celestine the Bishop of Rome, or whether the British bishops applied for assistance immediately to their Gallican brethren [1]. They landed safely after encountering a violent storm; and began without delay to teach the true faith of Christ in every part of the country. A great conference was held at S. Alban's, in which the Pelagians were refuted, and the people testified their joy by loud shouts. Their confidence was further secured by a great victory over the Saxons and Picts, which was gained while Germanus and Lupus were in the camp.

About twenty years afterwards the heresy began to revive, and Germanus returned in the company of Severus bishop of Treves, on the same errand as his former one. They were welcomed with great honour, and finding the people for the most part orthodox, they persuaded them to banish the leaders of the sect out of the country; and thus Britain was once more delivered from it. The champions of the faith confirmed their doctrines by several wonderful miracles.

[1] See Collier's summary of the evidence on either side. Eccl. Hist. B. I. p. 44.

They are said to have introduced at that time schools of learning, and the Gallican Liturgy, into Britain. Soon afterwards Germanus died at Ravenna, in old age.

---

MARCH 2.

## S. Chad, Bishop.

673.

S. Chad, or Ceadda, was one of four brothers, natives of Britain, who all devoted themselves to the service of the altar, and two of whom became bishops. They were educated in the monastery of Lindisfarne on the coast of Northumbria, under the care of Aidan its founder. When King Oswald had obtained the sovereignty of the united provinces of the Northumbrians, the Deiri, and the Berenicians, that holy man was brought by him in 634, from the college of Iona in Scotland, to preach the faith among them. He founded a monastery on the island of Lindisfarne and established his episcopal see there, in preference to the city of York, for the sake of the retirement which the island afforded him. Lindisfarne became famous for the holy ascetics who lived in it during the space of nearly two centuries and a half, before it was destroyed by the Danes. Insomuch that its common name, even at this day, is *Holy Island.* Aidan went about preaching, and baptizing; and at times the king himself might be seen acting as interpreter between the Christian bishop and the people; for Aidan was a stranger at

first to the dialect of the Northumbrians, and the king had become familiar with the northern language during his residence in Scotland. It is worthy of remark that this holy bishop never conformed to the Catholic rule of calculating the time of Easter. He slept in the Lord in the year 651.

Cedd, the elder brother of S. Chad, was sent by the influence of Oswi king of the Northumbrians to evangelize the East Saxons, about the year 653; and in three years afterwards he was consecrated their bishop by S. Finan the successor of S. Aidan at Lindisfarne, and fixed his see at London. In 660 he founded the monastery of Lestinghen in the province of the Deiri, and died in 664.

Alcfrid king of the Deiri, to whom his father Oswi had delegated his authority over that province, sent Wilfrid a priest of great sanctity into France to be consecrated to the see of York by Agilbert bishop of Paris. After this had been done with great ceremony at Compiegne, he delayed his return home for a long time. In this interval Oswi sent Ceadda to Canterbury to receive consecration, from Deusdedit the archbishop, to the church of York. On his arrival at Canterbury he found that the archbishop was dead; and he therefore went into Wessex, to Wina bishop of Winchester, who with two British bishops consecrated him in 666. Neither of these two bishops observed Easter in the regular manner, nor used the tonsure according to the rule of the Latin Chuıch, and hence, as well as for other reasons, a doubt was afterwards thrown upon the canonical regularity of Chad's consecration.

"Chad then being consecrated to the episcopate,"

says Venerable Bede, "presently began to devote his whole care to the truth and chastity becoming so high an ecclesiastical office; he gave up himself to humility, continence, and study; and diligently visited the towns and villages and castles, and the country cottages and hamlets in his diocess, preaching the gospel; and going not on horseback, but, like the Apostles, on foot[1]." The example of those two saints who had gone before him, Aidan his master, and his brother Cedd, he made his model in all things. In the mean time Wilfrid returned from France, bringing with him many admirable customs which he had learnt abroad. And thus the see of York was for a time divided between these holy men, each of them claiming to be the rightful bishop. The dispute was settled in favour of Wilfrid, on the arrival of Theodorus the archbishop of Canterbury. He was a native of Tarsus in Cilicia, and after living for a long time in a monastery in Rome, had been consecrated by Vitalian Bishop of Rome to the see of Canterbury in 668. He was the fifth in descent from S. Austin, who died in 604, not including his predecessor Wigard, who had died before his consecration. When he had given judgment in favour of Wilfrid and had objected to the consecration of his rival, Chad meekly answered, If you adjudge that I have not duly received the episcopate I willingly resign it; for indeed I never deemed myself worthy of it, but from obedience I consented, although so unworthy. Theodorus would not accept his resignation; but completed what he considered was wanting to perfect his consecration, and reserved

[1] Eccl. Hist. Lib. III. c. 28.

him for the first vacant see. In 670 Jarumanus bishop of the Mercians died, and Chad was appointed to succeed him. Wulfhere king of the province gave him land sufficient for fifty families, on which he built a monastery in a place called Eatberne in the province of Lindissi, in Lincolnshire, where the religious house founded by him long remained. His episcopal seat was at Liccidfield or Lichfield, in Staffordshire. Near the church he built a house, into which he used to retire with seven or eight brethren to pray and read in secret as often as they had leisure from labour and the ministry of the word. The history of his blessed departure I shall give in the language of the Venerable Bede.

"When he had honourably governed the Church in that province for two years and a half, by God's pleasure the time approached of which Ecclesiastes speaks, There is a time for throwing stones and a time for gathering them. For a pestilence was sent from God to remove by death the living stones of the Church from their places on earth to His house in heaven. After many had been taken from the Church, the hour of this most reverend prelate came near, when he should depart from this world to the Lord. And it happened on a certain day that he was in the house I have mentioned, and only one brother, whose name was Oswinus, was with him, the rest of his companions having returned to the church for some cause. Oswinus was a monk of great holiness, and had left the world from a pure longing after the reward which is above. He was especially worthy to receive from the Lord a revelation of His secret purpose, for those who heard it

from him could credit what he said, when he repeated it to them. He had come with Queen Edilrida from the province of East Anglia, and had been her chief servant, and the steward of her house. When the fervour of his faith had increased, and he had determined to renounce the world, he did not do it slothfully, nor partially, but he stripped himself of all earthly things. And leaving behind him all that he possessed, he clothed himself in a simple habit, having an axe in his hand, and so he came to the monastery of the reverend father, which is called Lestinghen. He said that he did not enter it to be idle, as some did, but to labour; and he gave proof of this by his deeds; for the less he was able to meditate on Scripture, the more did he apply himself to work with his hands. And when at last he was admitted, for the great reverence of his devotion, among the brethren who accompanied the bishop to his separate house, he laboured out of doors at whatever was needful while the others were engaged within in sacred reading.

"On this day he was doing something out of doors, and his companions were gone back to the church, as I said, and the bishop was alone in the oratory, engaged in reading and prayer. And suddenly Oswinus heard, as he afterwards said, the sweetest sounds of music, as of happy visitants coming down from heaven to earth; the sound seemed to come from the south-east, and by degrees it approached him, till it arrived at the roof of the oratory where the bishop was, which it seemed to enter and fill, and sometimes to float around it. And while he was anxiously pondering in his mind what it could

be that he heard, after the space of about an hour, he heard the same song of joy ascend from the oratory, and with ineffable sweetness return back to heaven by the same way that it had come. He remained for nearly an hour wondering and considering what sounds those could be; when the bishop opened the window of the oratory, and made a sign with his hand for him to come to him. He went in accordingly; and the bishop said, Go quickly to the church, and bid those seven brothers come hither, and do you also return with them. When they came, he first of all exhorted them to practise the virtue of peace and love towards one another, and towards all the faithful. He also counselled them to follow with unwearied constancy the institutions and the discipline of their rule, which they had learnt from him, and had seen observed by him. Then he told them that the day of his departure was very near. For that beloved guest, said he, who used to visit our brethren has come to me to-day, and has been pleased to call me from this world; now return to the church, and tell the brethren to commend my departure in their prayers to our Lord, and to remember to prepare for their own decease, of which the hour is uncertain, by vigils, and prayers, and good works. Then he who had heard the heavenly song returned alone, and throwing himself on the ground, said, I beseech you, father, to allow me to ask you something. Ask what you wish, he said. I beseech you to tell me what was that song of joy which I heard coming down from heaven to this oratory, and after a time returning to heaven. He answered, If you perceived the coming of that

heavenly company, and heard the voice of their song, I command you in the name of God not to tell it to any one till after my departure. For in truth they were the spirits of angels who came to call me away to the heavenly reward which I have always loved and desired. And they promised to return after seven days, and to carry me with them.

"And it happened as it had been foretold to him. He was soon after affected with great languor of body, which daily increased; and on the seventh day, as had been promised, after he had strengthened himself for his departure by receiving the Body and Blood of our Lord, his holy soul was delivered from the prison of the body, and was carried by the angels his companions, as we may well believe, to the eternal joys above. It is no wonder if he gladly looked forward to the day of his death, or rather to the day of the Lord, whose coming he had always anxiously waited for. For amidst many works of purity, and humility, and teaching, and prayer, and voluntary poverty, and other virtues, he was so wholly subdued to the fear of God, and so mindful was he of those whom he presided over, that, as I have been told by a certain brother named Trumbert, who had been taught by him in holy Scripture, and had been brought up in the monastery under his care, if perchance, while he was reading or doing any thing else, a great storm of wind suddenly arose, he would intreat the Lord's mercy, and would beseech Him to have pity upon mankind. And if the storm continued to increase, he would close his book, and fall upon his face, and remain a long time prostrate in prayer. And if a still more violent tempest came

on, or if thunder and lightning disturbed the earth and the air, he would go into the church, and would anxiously apply himself to prayers and psalms until the usual calm of the atmosphere was restored. And when he was asked why he did so, he answered, Have you not read, the Lord thundered from heaven, and the Most High uttered His voice; He sent out His arrows and scattered them, He multiplied lightning and troubled them. The Lord troubles the air, and raises the wind; He darts the lightning and thunders from heaven, to make the inhabitants of the earth fear Him; to recal their thoughts to the future judgment. And thus He would humble their pride and boldness by reminding them of that tremendous day when the heavens and the earth shall be consumed with fire, and when He Himself shall come with great power and glory to judge the living and the dead. Therefore, said he, we ought to answer this heavenly admonition with due fear and love, and as often as He thus, as it were, raises His hand to strike and yet forbears, we ought to implore His mercy that He would cleanse the secret places of our hearts, and would root out all evil, so that we may never deserve the stroke of His anger.

"Ceadda departed on the 2nd of March, 673, and was buried at first near the church of S. Mary, but afterwards a church was built under the invocation of the blessed Peter, prince of the apostles, and his bones were translated thither. In both of these places frequent miracles have been performed, to testify his holiness [1]."

Since the time of S. Chad great changes have

[1] Ven. Bede, Eccl. Hist. lib. iv. cap. 3.

befallen the see of Lichfield. In 789 Adrian Bishop of Rome erected it into an archbishopric, at the desire of King Offa; and a pall was sent to Eadulf the bishop. The sees of Hereford, Worcester, Legaceaster, Sionaceaster, Clinham, and Donwich acknowledged the bishop of Lichfield as their metropolitan.

Soon after the Conquest, Lichfield was thought too small for the residence of a bishop, and in 1075 the see was transferred to Chester, and thence in 1102 to Coventry. In 1170 the privileges of a cathedral were equally divided between Coventry and Lichfield. The bishop was chosen alternately by the chapter of each church, and the united chapter of both cathedrals governed their affairs. The bishop was styled of Coventry and Lichfield. This continued till the cathedral church of Coventry was suppressed by Act of Parliament, 33 Henry VIII.

Great part of the present cathedral of Lichfield was built about 1140 by bishop Roger Clinton, who was consecrated in 1129 and died at Antioch in 1149. The Lady-chapel and cloisters were added by Walter de Langton, who was consecrated in 1296, and died in 1321. He also spent 2000*l.* on a sumptuous shrine for the honour of S. Chad. There were many nobly-endowed chauntries in the cathedral; and these all fell into the hands of the spoiler in the reign of King Henry VIII. The glorious shrine of S. Chad was pulled down, and the value of it was given to the Church for repairs.

During the stormy scenes of the Great Rebellion, which followed as a consummation of the deeds of the sixteenth century, Lichfield was noted for three sieges which the Close sustained. The feast of

S. Chad in 1643 is memorable for the death of the Lord Brook, who commanded the army of the rebel Puritans. As he led on the attack upon the sacred enclosure he called aloud on God for a sign by which His approval might be known. While he raised the visor of his helmet in order to be the better heard, a bullet went through his head and he fell dead on the spot. This fearful sign did not daunt his fanatical followers; and they carried the Close by storm. The treasures of the Church having been pillaged a century before, by their predecessors in sacrilege, they found nothing to gratify their avarice, and were fain to avenge their disappointment on the sacred building itself. Soon after the restoration of King Charles II., bishop Hacket repaired at a great expense the ravages which they had committed.

"The name of Lichfield is supposed to signify a field of dead bodies; and the city bears for its device an escutcheon of landscape with many martyrs in it, in several ways massacred. A small plot of ground within the city is still called The Christian Field, where a number of Christians were murdered by the Romans in 303 or 304, about the same time as S. Alban's martyrdom under Maximian the colleague of Dioclesian. They were left unburied there to be devoured by birds and beasts of prey [1]."

There were formerly two monasteries in Lichfield; one called the station of S. Chad, afterwards Stow; and the other under the patronage of the Blessed Virgin.

[1] Harwood's History of Lichfield.

His food it was the heavenly word;
He searched the Book of Truth and Love,
Till watchful prayer would wings afford,
And he would be with them above.

This is the narrow way to heaven;
O holy Godhead, holy Three,
The Three in One, to us be given
Thus by this way to come to Thee.

Hymns from the Parisian Breviary, p. 315.

---

MARCH 7.

## S. Perpetua, Martyr.

203.

S. Perpetua and her companions suffered martyrdom in the reign of the Emperor Severus, about the year 203, or perhaps a little later. Some martyrologies mention Tuburbium, a town of Mauritania in Africa, as the scene of their triumph; but S. Prosper says that it took place at Carthage.

The five catechumens, Revocatus and his fellow-slave and perhaps sister Felicitas, Saturninus, Secundulus, and Vivia Perpetua were seized by the orders of Minutius the pro-consul of Africa on the suspicion of being Christians. Saturus was afterwards added to their number, and became their instructor in the higher mysteries of the faith.

Perpetua was a young matron, of twenty-two years of age, and of an honourable family; her father and mother and two brothers were then alive, and

she had an infant child. All her relations seem to have been Christians except her father. No mention is made of her husband in her Acts; and hence it is supposed that he was absent, or perhaps in concealment for his religion. Felicitas was also a young married woman, of humble rank, but filled with ardent love for her Lord.

They were not immediately put in prison, but were confined in a private house, under a guard. During this interval they were baptized; and, as Perpetua relates in her Acts, they prayed to the Lord to grant them constancy to endure all that awaited them. Her father besought her, even with violence, to renounce her faith, but she was not to be moved by his entreaties.

The martyrs were afterwards shut up in a dark crowded prison, where Perpetua suffered much from the overpowering heat, the rudeness of the soldiers, and anxiety for her child. By the kindness of a priest they were removed from this place to a more commodious prison. Here Perpetua had a vision, or, as it might in these days be called, a dream, of a golden ladder, which reached from earth to heaven, and which was so narrow that only one person at a time could ascend; and its sides were armed with many sharp cutting instruments. A wakeful dragon lay at the foot, to terrify those who would ascend. Saturus mounted first; and having reached the top he turned round to her and said, Perpetua, I wait for you, but beware of the dragon. And she answered, In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ he shall not hurt me. And as she began to ascend the first step of the ladder she seemed to tread upon his

head. When she arrived at the top she saw a venerable man in the guise of a shepherd, feeding his flock; and round him stood many thousands clothed in white. He raised his head, and looked on her, and said, You are welcome, my child. And he fed her with the milk of the flock; and those who stood by said, Amen. At the sound of their voices she awoke. Then she understood that it was the will of her heavenly Lord that she should die for Him.

While she remained in prison her father made another effort to prevail on her to deny Christ, but with no better success than before. He besought her by his grey hairs, by her mother, and by her child; kissing her hands, and throwing himself at her feet.

At last the little company was brought to the forum to be publicly examined by Hilarian the procurator, who acted for the proconsul. Hilarian entreated Perpetua to renounce her faith, and offer sacrifice for the health of the emperor. Her father pressing forward to second his entreaties was beaten off by order of the magistrate. The sight of this insult afflicted Perpetua more than her own sufferings. As nothing could persuade her and her companions to deny the faith, they were condemned to the wild beasts; and were remanded to prison till the season of the shows. Perpetua was then separated from her child, not by the persecutor's order but by her own father, who would not restore it to her, hoping thus to overcome her constancy.

Soon after her return to prison, as Perpetua was one day praying, she began to entreat the Lord with many tears for the soul of her little brother Dino-

crates, who had died some time before of a cancer in the face at the age of seven years. On the following night she saw his soul going out, as she expressed it, from the place of darkness, his body too seemed to be purified and clothed and refreshed; and what was formerly a wound then seemed only a scar. She was also favoured in her sleep with a foresight of her agony, in which she seemed to combat with the Evil One, and to overcome him.

Saturus also relates a dream or vision which he had, in which he thought that angels were carrying him up to heaven, and ushered him into the presence of the Lord of Life, where he met again the martyrs who had gone before him in the same persecution.

Secundulus died in prison before the shows began. The rest of the blessed companions were removed to the camp prison to grace the natal festival of the emperor Geta, in honour of which the shows were to take place.

Felicitas would soon give birth to a child; and as even the inhuman laws of those times would not permit a woman in that condition to be put to death, she feared that she might be separated from her dear friends, and might have to tread the path of martyrdom alone. But at the prayers of the little company the Lord released her from her fears. When she cried out in pain, the gaoler said to her, If you are now so distressed, what will you do when the beasts are let loose upon you? To which she answered, I only suffer what I now suffer; but then Another shall be in me Who will suffer for me, for I shall then suffer for Him.

On the evening before their martyrdom they supped

in public, as was the custom. And when the people were pressing to see them, Saturus said, Surely to-morrow will suffice, good friends, to gaze on us. Yet mark our countenances well, that ye may know them again at the awful day of doom.

They walked to the amphitheatre with every sign of joy; Perpetua with a serene countenance, her eyes cast down, to avoid the rude gaze of the crowd; and Felicitas giving thanks that she was not separated from her beloved companions. They refused to put on the pagan dresses which were usually worn by persons condemned to the beasts, and their humour was indulged. When they entered the amphitheatre their composed and triumphant appearance so provoked the audience that it loudly demanded that they should be scourged. After this additional cruelty had been inflicted, Saturus was first exposed to the fury of a wild boar; but it turned on its keeper and mortally wounded him. A bear also refused to touch the martyr; and at last he was dispatched by the bite of a leopard; the first of the little company to mount heavenwards, as Perpetua had foreseen. As he departed he said to Pudens a soldier who stood near, himself afterwards a martyr, Farewell, remember my faith.

Saturninus and Revocatus were then torn by a leopard and a bear. The two heroic women were the last to suffer. They were tossed by a wild cow. Perpetua was first attacked, and fell heavily on her back. She did her best to arrange her torn and disordered dress, being more mindful, as her Acts say, of modesty than of pain. She bound up her dishevelled hair, lest she should seem forlorn in the

hour of victory. She also raised and supported her weak companion: and the people, moved by the pitiful sight, cried out to spare them, and they were taken away. So entirely had the martyr triumphed in the woman, or rather the love of Christ over her weakness, that the whole scene seemed to her as a dream.

They were put to death in the Spoliarium, a place where the wounded were dispatched by young gladiators. Perpetua was cruelly tortured by an inexperienced youth, who wounded her many times before striking the mortal blow.

S. Perpetua wrote her own Acts till the evening before she suffered. Tertullian is supposed by some to have completed them, before he became a Montanist. Her name is celebrated by S. Augustin, and has been commemorated in the canon of the Mass ever since the time of S. Gregory. It occurs also in an ancient Roman kalendar of date 354. The Greeks keep her feast on the 2nd of February and 1st of March. It was observed at Carthage in the time of S. Augustin. The bodies of S.S. Perpetua and Felicitas were preserved in the great church of Carthage in the 5th age.

On champions blest, in Jesus' name,
 Short be your strife, your triumph full,
Till every heart have caught your flame,
 And lightened of the world's misrule
Ye soar those elder saints to meet,
Gathered long since at Jesus' feet,
No world of passions to destroy,
Your prayers and struggles o'er, your task all praise and joy.

Christian Year, p. 363.

MARCH 12.

## S. Gregory the Great, Bishop of Rome.

604.

S. Gregory I., surnamed the Great, was born in Rome about the year 540. His father Gordianus was of senatorial rank, and possessed of great wealth. His mother Sylvia, after the death of her husband, retired from the world into a small cell or oratory near the gate of S. Paul. The three sisters of Gordianus were holy virgins consecrated to God in the religious life. Felix IV. Bishop of Rome was an ancestor of the saint.

Gregory at first applied himself with great diligence to secular learning, and was advanced to the high office of prætor of the city. Even at that time he despised the glory of the world, and the dignity with which he was attended. He spent much of his time in the society of Constantinus, a disciple of S. Benedict the father of the monastic life in the west. Thus early did he lay the foundation of that self-denial and indifference to the world, which he perfected in the cloister.

When his father's decease left him master of his property, he renounced the world, and bestowed the greatest part of his wealth in founding six monasteries in Sicily; and a seventh in the city of Rome, which he dedicated in honour of S. Andrew. It is now possessed by the order of Camaldoli. In this monastery Gregory took the vows of a religious life about the year 575, and lived for some time under the superiors Hilarion, and Maximian who succeeded

him. His time was devoted chiefly to prayer, to reading and dictating. So earnestly did he give himself up to fasting and study that he injured his health, and the great weakness which followed he carried with him till his death. On one occasion he was grievously afflicted by his inability to keep the fast of the Holy Saturday, which even little children were then wont to observe; and he besought Eleutherius, a monk of great sanctity in his convent, to pray for him that he might be able to keep it. His prayer was granted and the fast did him no harm.

In the year 577 as he one day passed through the market place in Rome he saw some beautiful slaves exposed for sale. Hearing that they were English and pagans he earnestly besought Benedict I. Bishop of Rome to send missioners into Britain; and as no one could be found to undertake so arduous a duty he offered to go himself. With great difficulty he obtained leave; but he had not been gone three days before the clergy and people of Rome publicly implored their Bishop, as he passed through the streets, to recal him, alleging that his presence was necessary to the good of the city. Couriers were accordingly sent after him, to bring him back; and he returned to his monastery. He was soon after ordained a cardinal deacon.

He was chosen by Pelagius II. the successor of Benedict to conduct an embassy to Constantinople to salute the new emperor Tiberius who succeeded Justin in 578. He took many of his monks with him, and they lived as nearly as possible according to the rule of their house in Rome. Nothing important happened during his stay in the imperial

city, except his disputation with Eutychius the patriarch of Constantinople regarding the nature of the incorruptible body. Eutychius maintained that after the resurrection it will be impalpable and subtle as air. Gregory, finding him obstinate, refused to have any intercourse with him. When the emperor Tiberius heard of the dispute, he appointed the cause to be pleaded in his presence, and condemned Eutychius to burn his book. As he afterwards lay a-dying, the patriarch declared his belief that we shall rise in the very bodies which we now wear.

Gregory made many friends among the holy men of the East, with whom he continued ever after to exchange letters and other offices of love. On his return to Rome he brought with him several precious relics of the saints. He was soon after chosen abbat of his monastery.

In 590 a deadly pestilence prevailed in the city, and great numbers were carried off by it; and among others Pelagius the Bishop. The eyes of the clergy were immediately turned on Gregory as his successor, but the humble man used every endeavour to avoid the dangerous honour. While his election remained doubtful, he appointed a grand procession to take place with solemn litanies to entreat Almighty God to avert his anger. It moved from seven stations in the city, in as many troops or bands, to the church of S. Mary Major. The first company consisted of the clergy; the second, of the abbats and their monks; the third, of the abbesses and their religious; the fourth, of children; the fifth, of laics; the sixth, of widows; and the seventh, of married women. Each band was led by the priests of the

quarter of the city from which it came. This is supposed to have been the origin of the "Greater Litanies" on S. Mark's Day. While the procession lasted eighty persons in it died of the plague; yet Gregory persevered, and the prayers of the city were heard.

At that time the consent of the emperor was necessary to confirm the election of the Bishop of Rome. For besides his high ecclesiastical authority he enjoyed a delegated power over the senate and people of Rome. Gregory wrote privately to the emperor Mauritius, who had succeeded Tiberius in 386, beseeching him to refuse his consent to the choice of the clergy. When he heard that it had been already given, and that the gates of the city were guarded to prevent his escape, he prevailed on some merchants to convey him secretly out of Rome into the country, where he lay concealed for several days. He was discovered by Divine assistance, as historians relate, and was brought back to the city and consecrated on the 13th September 590. In his letters he laments being dragged from the repose of his convent into the dangerous activity of a life in the world.

Early in the following year he wrote in council a synodal letter, according to custom, to the patriarchs of Antioch, Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Constantinople, professing his faith, and commending himself to their prayers. In it he bears the following remarkable testimony to the authority of the general councils: "Moreover since with the heart man believeth unto justice, but with the mouth confession is made unto salvation, I confess that I receive and venerate the four councils, as the four books of the Holy Gospel.

To wit, the Nicene, in which the perverse doctrine of Arius is destroyed; the Constantinopolitan also, in which the error of Eunomius and Macedonius is refuted; the first of Ephesus, in which the impiety of Nestorius is condemned; and that of Chalcedon, in which the wickedness of Eutyches and Dioscorus is reprobated. I embrace them with my whole devotion, and I guard them with the most perfect approbation; because upon these, as upon a four-square stone, rises the structure of the holy faith; and whatsoever a man's life and actions may be, if he do not rest on their solidity, even though he seem to be a stone, yet he lies out of the building. The fifth council I equally venerate. All the persons whom those venerable councils reject, I reject; whom they receive, I embrace; for, since they were appointed by Catholic consent, whoever presumes to loose whom they bind, or to bind whom they loose, destroys himself and not them. Whoever therefore judges differently let him be anathema. Whoever holds the faith of these synods peace be to him from God the Father, through Jesus Christ His Son, Who with Him liveth and reigneth consubstantially God, in the unity of the Holy Spirit for ever and ever. Amen[1]."

During his pontificate in an age of unusual turmoil, the labours of S. Gregory were unceasing in restoring and preserving the peace and unity of the Church. Britain, Spain, Gaul, Germany, Lombardy, Africa, and the East felt the influence of his superintending care. Whether in repressing heresy, in healing or preventing schism, or in the still more honourable office of enlarging the dominion of the Church, he

[1] Ep. B. I. 25.

stood pre-eminent among all the bishops of his age. Distant churches in their difficulties and disputes appealed to him as the Father of Christendom. Even in the affairs of kingdoms his advice was often asked. Thus when Brunehaut queen of France and her grandson were about to conclude a treaty with the emperor, she sent to ask the opinion of S. Gregory regarding it. At home he set an example of a holy life to his clergy; and to all he was a pattern of charity and humility. To poor priests, widows, and monks he was a liberal benefactor; every day he entertained twelve strangers at his table; and once, as we learn on good authority, he had an angel guardian for a guest. He reformed many abuses in the management of the patrimony of the Church; and distributed its revenues for the good of the poor. The sacred vessels he allowed to be sold for the redemption of Christian captives. Many towns and churches in Italy having been destroyed in the war with the Lombards, he united their bishoprics to the neighbouring sees, and thus began the institution of cardinal bishops. He also superintended the election and appointment of bishops throughout the whole of Italy, and even at a greater distance. In Sicily and Marseilles he interfered in behalf of the Jews who had been cruelly oppressed by the Christians; and in Cagliari in Sardinia he secured for them liberty of worship, which had been refused them by the Christians at the instigation of a converted Jew.

In the year 592 Rome was threatened with imminent danger from the Lombards. The exarch who represented the emperor in Rome was inactive, and the governors of Ravenna and the frontier towns were

unprepared to meet the approaching enemy. They were however roused in time by the vigilance and energy of Gregory.

In 593 he sent a legate to Constantinople to inquire into the harsh treatment which some Isaurian monks had received from John the patriarch. He also composed some differences in the church of Milan. The bishop of Ravenna was also called to account for presuming to wear the pallium, the ensign of metropolitan dignity, on ordinary occasions, a privilege which the Bishop of Rome alone enjoys. In the following year Gregory sent a mission to convert the pagan inhabitants of Sardinia.

In 595 occurred the memorable dispute with John of Constantinople, for his ascetical life surnamed the Faster, regarding the title of universal patriarch. S. Gregory protested against it as striking at the root of the independent authority of each bishop. Many reasons he alleged in condemnation. Among the principal of these he urged that if the Church were represented by a universal bishop of whom all other bishops should be only the vicars, as the patriarch of Constantinople maintained, the Church must fall with him if he should lapse into error. And again[1], that though in another sense the title had been recognized by the council of Chalcedon as belonging to the Bishop of Rome[2], it had never been assumed from a feeling of modesty. Gregory

[1] Ep. B. V. 18 and 43.

[2] Among the documents of the council there are several communications made by private individuals to Leo Bishop of Rome which begin in this form; "to the most holy and beloved of God the universal archbishop and patriarch of great Rome, Leo, and to the universal synod of Chalcedon," &c. See Labbe.

even declared that whoever should first assert this undue prerogative over other bishops would be the forerunner of Antichrist; an opinion to which every Christian in communion with the see of Rome at this day may yield his hearty assent.

Justly as Gregory condemned this assumption of the patriarch, he elsewhere in his writings declares the pre-eminence which the see of Rome then held among other churches. Thus regarding the primate of Byzacene, whom the emperor had sent to him for judgment, he writes, "As to what he says of his subjection to the apostolic see, I know of no bishop who is not subject to it, if any fault is found in a bishop; but where fault does not demand, all are equal for the sake of humility[1]." And again, "without the authority and consent of the apostolic see nothing that is done in a Synod has any force[2]," And in another place he calls the apostolic see "the head of all the churches[3]. We shall see by and by how nearly the language of some doctors of the Anglican church expresses the same opinion. John the patriarch lived and died in the reputation of sanctity, and was otherwise highly esteemed by the whole Church.

In the same year in which this dispute began a council of twenty-three bishops met in Rome to settle many matters of discipline. They enacted that no priest serving at the altar should chaunt even the Gospel at Mass, lest he should be chosen rather for the sake of his voice than for his character. Clerks of the lesser order were enjoined to sing the Psalms and to read the lessons. The council recommended all bishops to employ clerks as much as possible in

[1] Ep. B. IX. 59. [2] Ep. B. IX. 68. [3] Capitular II. p. 1254.

their private houses as their attendants, that these might have the benefit of the example of their spiritual fathers. It also strictly forbade receiving money for palliums, orders, or generally for any instrument conveying ecclesiastical authority, as notarial letters.

In the same year Gregory sent directions to his envoy in Gaul to make use of the patrimony of the Church there in clothing the poor, and in purchasing and educating as monks young English slaves whom he intended to rear for the mission which he was preparing.

In the month of July 596 Augustin and his companions left Rome on their errand of love to Britain —an event ever memorable in the history of this country. Truly may we say with venerable Bede, "If Gregory is not to others an apostle he is to us, for the seal of his apostleship are we in the Lord." Thus were the ardent desires of the simple monk for the illumination of Britain fulfilled by the Bishop. His exalted rank had only added the power to the will of redeeming England from the thraldom of paganism, into which it had relapsed since the arrival of the Saxons. The events of that mission we shall read in the life of St. Augustin of Canterbury.

During the remaining years of his pontificate Gregory was unceasingly employed in preserving order and discipline throughout the whole Church. One of his most important acts was the reform of the Divine Office. The ritual of Gelasius his predecessor in the end of the fifth century he adopted as the groundwork of his own. That part of it called the Sacramentary, which contains the office for the consecration

of the blessed Eucharist, or the Mass, has been in few material things changed since that time; and the missals of the Latin Church are framed upon its model. What is usually called the Canon of the Mass, is of much older date than any other part, and is believed to belong to apostolic times. Besides the Sacramentary, Gregory collected in an Antiphonary all that should be chaunted in the Divine Office; all the Lessons in a Lectionary, the Psalms in a Psalter: and the Directions, or Rubrics, as we should call them, in a book of Order. Great changes also were made in the music of the Church. During the Arian troubles at Milan in 386, S. Ambrose had introduced the sacred chaunt which had been known to the Churches of the East for some time before, and which still bears at Milan the name of the holy bishop. Its origin is lost in antiquity. To this, which consisted of four chaunts or tones, Gregory added other four; and the eight thus collected form at this day the solemn strains so well known in the Church as the Gregorian Chaunt. The Ambrosian tones are the first, third, fifth, and seventh; the others were added by S. Gregory, and bear a certain musical relation to these four. This chaunt is also known by the name of Plain-song and Canto Fermo. S. Gregory used to train the singing boys or school himself, even when confined by weakness to his couch. We read of a "certain skilful chaunter named Maban who had been taught in Kent the art of singing by the successors of the disciples of the blessed Gregory, and who was employed for twelve years by Acca, bishop of Hexham A.D. 709 in teaching his monks the songs of the Church, and in restoring to its ancient sim-

plicity what they had known before, but which had become corrupted by long use or negligence. For Acca the bishop was himself a very skilful singer, as well as deeply read in all sacred learning[1]."

Who that has ever heard the music of the Gregorian chaunt in the Latin Church can forget the solemnity not unmixed with sadness with which it fills the soul of the Catholic worshipper. Whether intoned by devout priests and monks consecrated to God, or by the artless voices of children, in the sublimest act of Christian adoration on earth, or at the vespers of each closing day, it seems ever to breathe holiness and heavenly peace. It is related of many devout souls now with God, that they could never hear the Mixolydian song of the Preface without being melted in tears. "Sooth no tongue can be adequate to give an idea of the impression produced by the plain-song of the choir. It is full of history, full of sanctity. While the Gregorian chaunt rises you seem to hear the whole Catholic Church behind you responding. It exhales a perfume of Christianity, an odour of penitence and of compunction which overcomes you. No one cries, How admirable; but by degrees the return of those monotonous sounds penetrates one, and as it were impregnates the soul; without one's ever dreaming of judging, or of appreciating, or of learning the airs which one hears[2]."

Rome was ecclesiastically divided into seven regions, each containing so many churches and clergy. The priests of each quarter served by turns, beginning with those of the third, who performed the

[1] Ven. Bede, Eccl. Hist. Book v. c. 21.

[2] *Mores Catholici*—in part quoting Généroult.

offices on Sunday. Of churches there were four kinds. Patriarchal, or Basilicæ; Titular; Diaconal; and Oratories. The first belonged peculiarly to the Bishop of Rome, such as the church of S. John Lateran, where his episcopal chair has always been; of S. Peter in the Vatican, of S. Mary Major, of S. Laurence without the City, and of the Holy Cross of Jerusalem. Titular or parish churches were each of them served by a cardinal priest, who sometimes had several assistants. In the year 499 there were thirty churches which gave titles to cardinal priests, and among these sixty-nine of the clergy were generally distributed. Diaconal churches were usually hospitals or places for bestowing alms. Oratories were small chapels without any fixed priest, but to which one was occasionally sent by the bishop, to say the Divine Office. S. Gregory fixed the churches where the Eucharistic Office should be said during Lent, and on the great Festivals and the Ember days. These are called *Stations*, and have since his time been multiplied in the Latin Church. They were generally chosen from among the first two classes. On the festivals of the saints the office was said in the church where their relics were preserved.

The regard which S. Gregory had for the memorials of the saints is attested by a remarkable letter which he wrote to Serenus bishop of Marseilles, on hearing that he had destroyed the image of a saint in his church lest the people should pay it undue honour. He commended his zeal for God's glory, but not his hasty disrespect to the memory of the saint. After the truce with the Lombards had been

concluded in 598, he wrote a letter to their Queen Theodolinda, enclosing a reliquary in which was a portion of the Holy Cross for her little son. And when the Empress Constantia Augusta wrote to him entreating him to send her a relic of S.S. Peter and Paul, he declared that he dared not approach their august remains for so sacrilegious a purpose.

In 601 a Council was held in Rome in which the privileges of the monastic orders were settled. Many rules were made for the government of religious houses, not only at that time, but frequently during the pontificate of S. Gregory, who devoted much care to the perfection of the monastic life. The love which he had been taught in his youth for the rule of S. Benedict he never ceased to cherish.

In 602 the Emperor Mauritius was put to death with his whole family by Phocas a usurper. For the sake of the Church, Gregory secured the good-will of the new emperor. In the following year the war between the Lombards and the empire was renewed.

On the 12th March 604, after a life of unwearied activity in the service of his heavenly Master, S. Gregory slept in the Lord, Till the last his chief care was for the Church, and particularly for his English mission. S. Hildefonsus archbishop of Toledo in the 7th century writes thus of him; "He surpassed Antony in holiness, Cyprian in eloquence, and Augustin in wisdom." Yet so great was his humility that he subscribed himself "Servant of the servants of God," a style which his successors in the chair of S. Peter have retained till this day.

He was buried in the basilica of S. Peter. His

pallium, reliquary, and girdle were preserved as precious memorials. John the Deacon minutely describes a portrait of him which with those of his father and mother was kept, when he wrote, in the monastery of S. Andrew. It represents S. Gregory as of tall and dignified aspect, with a sweet and noble physiognomy, a beard not very long, and hair curled and nearly black, and wearing the clerical tonsure. In his left hand he held the book of the Gospels, and with his right he gave the blessing.

Of all the eminent persons who before or since his time have filled the chair of S. Peter, S. Gregory has left the most voluminous writings. The principal of these are his *Morals* or commentaries on the book of Job, written during his embassy to Constantinople; the *Pastoral Care*, a treatise on the duties of a Christian bishop; the *Dialogues*, a history of the life and blessed departure of many holy persons; twenty-two homilies on the Prophet Ezekiel; forty homilies on the Holy Gospels; and about eight hundred and forty Epistles.

His festival is kept throughout Christendom; by the Greeks on the 11th March, and on the following day by the Western Church. In the synod of Clif or Cloveshove in 747 it was enjoined "that the natal day of the blessed Pope Gregory, and the day of the Deposition of S. Augustin archbishop and confessor, who was sent by our father Gregory and first brought the knowledge of the Faith, the sacrament of Baptism, and tidings of the heavenly country, should be venerated by all with becoming honour." This was confirmed by the council of Oxford in 1222[1].

[1] Wilkins' Concilia Mag. Brit.

His Champion true, to wage His heavenly war,
The Spirit hath anointed all within,
From His full horn of blessings; and from far
Hath sent His flock to feed, and souls to win.

Shepherd and Father, and example fair,
His all he spends for them—himself is spent;
Servant of servants, weighed by others' care,
And all things made to all men,—wholly bent

Lost souls to save, he for the guilty prays,
Comforts the comfortless, instructs the blind;
Walks amid loftier thoughts than human ways,
With heaven-wrought chains the evil foe to bind.

Grant, Lord! his prayers may not be all in vain,—
That we a royal priesthood may be won;
And with an ever-freshly flowing strain,
May sing the Father, Spirit, and the Son!

Hymns from the Parisian Breviary, p. 292.

---

MARCH 18.

## S. Edward, King and Martyr.

978.

S. Edward the Martyr was the son of Edgar King of England and his queen Ethelfleda surnamed the Fair. His mother was married in 961 and died in the following year soon after giving birth to her son. In 975 Edward succeeded his father in the throne of England, not of the West Saxons only, as he is described in the kalendar. He owed his crown to the influence of S. Dunstan, and S. Oswald archbishop of York, which prevailed over the opposition of his step-mother Elfrida, and some of the nobility.

This unprincipled woman was bent upon raising her own son Ethelred, then a child of seven years of age, to the throne. During the short reign of Edward, the kingdom was much disturbed by civil discord; comets and other portentous signs appeared in the sky, and a great scarcity of corn, followed by famine and a murrain among the cattle, afflicted the nation. It was at this time also that the memorable council was held at Calne, to decide the controversy between the monks and secular canons. As the members sat in an upper chamber, the floor gave way, except that part where the chair of S. Dunstan was. This accident decided the claims of the monks, of whom Dunstan was the great patron.

S. Edward showed the greatest affection towards his step-mother and her son; and even resigned to them all the outward pomp of royalty but the name, devoting himself chiefly to the same life of holy retirement which in his later years his father had followed. But the ambition of Elfrida could not rest till she had accomplished his death. Its tragical circumstances were foreseen a short time before, by S. Editha a holy religious, daughter of K. Edgar, who presided over the monastery at Wilton.

In 978, as Edward was returning home from hunting, he dismissed his followers, and went a little out the way to pay a visit to his stepmother at Corfe Castle, in the Isle of Purbeck. She welcomed him with feigned courtesy, and while he was drinking a cup of wine as he sat on horseback ready to depart, one of her retainers stabbed him from behind with a dagger. Though dreadfully wounded he galloped off to overtake his attendants; but falling from the

saddle, and one foot remaining in the stirrup, he was dragged for a long way through the forest, and was at last discovered by the track of blood. By the orders of the queen he was privately buried without honour at Werham, in unhallowed ground. His enemies made a public show of joy; as if, says the historian, they had buried his memory with his body.

But in a little time his dishonoured grave began to be famous for frequent miracles. A heavenly light was seen to rest upon it; the lame walked, the deaf recovered their hearing, and the sick were healed by the power of God thus bearing testimony to the sanctity of His servant. Hence he is called a martyr; for he died innocently, and was afterwards honoured by miracles. When Elfrida heard tidings of these wonders, she resolved to visit the spot and witness them herself; but her horse refused to move. Every effort to subdue his obstinacy was made in vain, and the guilty queen stood rebuked by this marked sign of the divine justice. Within three years after the murder, the body of S. Edward was translated to the monastery of Shaftesbury, as shall be more carefully related on the 20th of June, when that event is commemorated in the Kalendar.

Elfrida became afterwards truly penitent, and resigning her royal state, she founded the convent of Benedictine nuns at Wherwell in Hampshire in 986, which she dedicated in honour of the Holy Cross and S. Peter, and whither she retired from the world to bewail her sins. During the remainder of her life she afflicted her body with many austerities, constantly wearing a garment of haircloth, and sleeping on the

court menials, whenever he went to Windsor to ask his dues from the king. But he endured all meekly and firmly; and at the end of two years K. Henry relented, and restored his manors.

No higher praise can the historian of his life give than when he says that Richard fulfilled every part of the Apostolic Rule for the conduct of a bishop. "A bishop," says S. Paul, "must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; but a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate[1]." And if the discipline of the Church allowed him to be the husband of one wife, he who, like the blessed Apostle himself, served God in the holy celibate, cannot be said to have fallen short of the Rule by exceeding it. His kindness and pity to the poor and those in distress endeared him to all. He preached often, "soothing the contrite, guiding those who came to confession, reforming the desperate, encouraging the willing, and strengthening the trembling." He practised severe austerities, and spent a great part of his time in prayer. Thus did a holy bishop of the middle ages feed the flock of God, and guide their footsteps and his own on the lowly path to heaven.

In 1247 he assisted at the translation of the body of S. Edmund, archbishop of Canterbury, into the Cistercian monastery at Pontigny. S. Louis King of France and his mother the Dowager Queen Blanche of Castile, and many prelates and nobles of the kingdom, were present.

[1] Titus i. 7.

In 1253 he was employed in preaching a crusade against the Saracens; and during his progress through the south of England he consecrated a church at Dover in honour of S. Edmund, on Mid-lent Sunday. It was connected with a hospital called God's House and a cemetery for the poor. In his sermon he commended his departure, which he foretold was very near, to the prayers of the people. On the next day while singing the Office he fainted, and was carried to bed. His strength rapidly declined, and the last rites of the Church were performed. As he lay waiting for his change, Symon de Teringe came to visit him, and reminded him of the Passion of the Lord which was approaching. Richard replied, Friday will be a joyous day to me. He would often embrace the crucifix, kissing the marks of the wounds, and saying, I thank Thee, O my Lord Jesu, for all the benefits which Thou hast conferred on me, and for the sufferings and the shame which Thou didst bear, and which caused Thee to cry out, Is there any sorrow like unto My sorrow? The name of the blessed Virgin also was often on his lips. And thus, surrounded by a company of religious priests and clerks, he departed on the 3d of April 1253, in the 57th year of his age and the 9th of his episcopate.

His body was vested in his pontifical habit according to the custom of the Church, and lay on a stately bier for some days, to allow the people to testify their affectionate regard. Those who assisted in preparing it for sepulture discovered how severely the saint had practised mortifications and discipline.

His remains were then borne in solemn state to

the cathedral church of Chichester. The train of mourners, as they passed through the towns and villages on their way, sang psalms from the office of the dead, and the people came out to meet them, and accompanied them a little way. And so they bore the blessed body to Chichester, and buried it before the altar of S. Edmund which had been erected by S. Richard. In 1276 it was removed to a more honourable place; and this translation was formerly commemorated on the 16th June. Many miracles rendered his tomb illustrious, and his name was admitted into the canon in 1262 by Urban IV. His life was written by his confessarius Radulphus or Ralph.

The diocess of Chichester includes nearly the whole of Sussex. The seat of the bishop of the South Saxons was originally fixed at Selsey by Eadbercht, who had been abbat of the monastery there, and was appointed to the see in 711. In 1075 bishop Stigand, in compliance with the resolution of the synod of London, transferred the seat to Chichester, and laid the foundation of the cathedral church, which was partly finished by Ralph, who succeeded him in 1091. It was twice nearly destroyed by fire, in 1114 and 1186. Bishop Seffrid in 1199 added a considerable part. The spire was begun by Ralph de Nevile between 1222 and 1244. The Lady Chapel was built by bishop Gilbert de Sancto Leofardo between 1282 and 1304. In 1360 the south transept was enlarged by bishop Langton. "In this transept is the sacellum or shrine which covers the tomb of S. Richard de Wyche[a]." This

[a] Horsefield's *History of Sussex*.

cathedral, like all the others, has suffered severely from the irreverence and fanaticism of later ages.

O aged Saint! far off I heard
  The praises of thy name;
Thy deed of power, thy skilful word,
  Thy zeal's triumphant flame.

I came and saw; and, having seen,
  Weak heart, I drew offence
From thy prompt smile, thy simple mien,
  Thy lowly diligence.

The Saint's is not the hero's praise;—
  This have I found, and learn
Nor to profane Heaven's humblest ways,
  Nor its least boon to spurn.

Lyra Apostolica, p. 92.

---

APRIL 4.

## S. Ambrose, Bishop and Confessor.

397.

THIS great doctor of the Latin Church was born about the year 340, probably at Treves, the residence of the pretorian prefect of Gaul. His father Ambrose then held that office. The saint used to say that his chief honour was to belong to the same family as the holy virgin and martyr Soteris, who suffered death for Christ in 304. He had a sister Marcellina and a brother Satyrus, both older than himself. While he was an infant, as he one day lay asleep in the cradle, a swarm of bees alighted on his mouth, and after a little time flew away without

injuring him. This was thought to give token of his future eloquence. The same story is related of Plato. On the death of the elder Ambrose his widow brought her family to Rome, where they lived together, and where the saint devoted himself to human learning, especially to the study of the Greek language, in which he made great proficiency. He became famous as a pleader, and was made counsellor to Probus, the pretorian prefect of Italy, who was a Christian. He also secured the favour of other great persons, and was promoted by the emperor Valentinian I. in 373 or 374 to the government of Liguria and Emilia, which embraced the whole of the northern part of Italy. As he departed to his province, Probus recommended clemency in these remarkable words, Go, govern, not as a judge, but as a bishop.

His brother Satyrus followed the same profession, and was also entrusted with the government of a province. His sister Marcellina made a vow of celibacy, and received the veil in S. Peter's church in Rome, on the feast of the Nativity, from the hands of Liberius the Bishop. She led a life of mortification and constant prayer, in company with Indicia, another holy virgin. Her time was spent chiefly in Rome, but after her brother's promotion she sometimes visited him at Milan. She survived both of her brothers, and now rests in the Ambrosian basilica at Milan. She is remembered by the Church on the 17th July.

In 374 Auxentius bishop of Milan died, and the emperor Valentinian I. declining to appoint a successor, though requested by the bishops and clergy

within the metropolitan jurisdiction to do so, they assembled to make choice among themselves. Auxentius had for more than twenty years been a principal leader among the Arians of the West; and their party was then strong in Milan. A fierce struggle ensued, between the Catholics and the followers of Arius, for the election. Each party used violent threats towards the other, and a serious tumult was dreaded. Ambrose, the governor of the province, interfered, and entered the church where the contest was going on, with the hope of allaying the excitement. He endeavoured to convince the unruly assembly of the duty of preserving peace and charity. While he was speaking, a child, as it is said, cried out thrice, Ambrose is bishop. The whole multitude took up the cry, and he was unanimously elected. It was in vain that he protested that he was only a catechumen and a laic; his entreaties and remonstrances only made them redouble their eager demand. He went into the hall of justice and affected to condemn certain criminals to severe torture, but the people were not to be deceived. He resorted to other stronger methods of persuading them of his unfitness for the office, but all in vain. At last he fled from the city by night, but lost his way; and when morning dawned he found himself at the Roman gate of Milan. A guard was set to watch him, yet he made his escape again, and was again discovered. The emperor Valentinian, who was then at Treves, cordially ratified the election; and Ambrose was finally persuaded to yield to the evident will of God. He was forthwith baptized; and notwithstanding his entreaties that his consecration might be put off for

a time, it was performed on the eighth day after his baptism, upon the 7th December 374. The pressing need of the Church has always been considered to excuse the uncanonical irregularity of such proceedings; and all the bishops of the East and West approved.

His first act was to give all his goods to the poor. His lands he bestowed on the Church, reserving the rents for his sister Marcellina during her lifetime. His brother Satyrus was entrusted with the management of them. He applied himself to the deep study of holy Scripture and of the ecclesiastical writers, particularly of Origen and Basil. His instructor was Simplicianus, a devout priest who succeeded him in the see, and was afterwards canonized. He set himself severe rules of living; spending nights in watching, and fasting on all days except sabbath and the Lord's day. In the Church of Milan, as in the Greek Church, sabbath was never observed as a fast-day, even in Lent. But when Ambrose went to Rome, and other places where such an exemption was unknown, he always conformed to the local custom. He offered the Christian sacrifice daily. His chamber was ever open to all who wished to see and speak with him. The hospitality which has always been considered a chief virtue in a catholic bishop he largely exercised. But he never was seen at entertainments in the houses of others. As was the general custom in the Church of that age he wrote to the other bishops, announcing his election. Among other letters which he received in answer was one from S. Basil bishop of Cæsarea, exhorting him to firmness against the Arians.

The Council of Illyria in 375 was assembled chiefly by the zeal and solicitations of S. Ambrose. It confirmed the confession of Nicæa, and passed several laws which Valentinian sanctioned. This prince died in the same year, and was succeeded by his two sons Gratian and Valentinian II. Gratian was really the sole emperor, his brother being quite a child. He was a firm friend of the Catholics, and had a great regard for S. Ambrose. Being about to march against the Goths, he asked the bishop to write a treatise on the divinity of our Lord, which might shield him from the subtlety of the heretics. S. Ambrose at his request wrote the two first books of his treatise "*Of the Faith.*"

A favourite subject of instruction with the saint in the earlier years of his episcopate was the high honour and grace of virginity. In Milan it was complained that he made too much of it; and the mothers used to forbid their daughters to go to hear his discourses, lest his irresistible eloquence should persuade them to take the irrevocable vow. But from Bologna, and even from Mauritania in Africa, many virgins, hearing the fame of his discourses in the praise of celibacy, came to receive the veil from his hands. For the instruction of Marcellina he collected these sermons into three books, entitled "*Of Virgins.*" The first having been delivered on the feast of S. Agnes is occupied with her praises. The second commemorates the glorious Virgin-Mother of God. In those days the consecrated virgins often lived in the same houses with their parents, and laboured with their hands. In a book of instruction for widows which S. Ambrose wrote shortly after

that just mentioned, he recommended prayers to the angels who are given as our guardians, and to the martyrs whose bodies seem to be pledges of their protection, and who seem to be witnesses of our lives and actions.

The Goths had ravaged the country from Thrace and Illyria to the Alps. S. Ambrose laboured to redeem the captives, even melting down and coining the vessels of the church which had not been consecrated; reserving the holy vessels for a more pressing need. When the Arians reproached him with sacrilege he replied, Are not souls more worthy of being preserved for God than gold? For in redeeming captives, not only is life preserved to the men, and honour to the women, but the faith to the children and youth, who would have been forced into idolatry.

In 379, Theodosius, then in his thirty-third year, was assumed by Gratian as a colleague in the room of Valens, who had held the empire of the East. He was a Spaniard by birth, and was descended from the emperor Trajan. His father had been one of the greatest captains of his age, but had fallen into disgrace with Gratian, and had been beheaded.

At this time Satyrus, the brother of S. Ambrose, died at Milan. His brother and sister watched by him till the last. He left them his whole property, but they considered themselves as only the stewards of the poor, and gave all to them. Satyrus is honoured by the Church on the 17th September. On one occasion as he was passing into Africa to recover a debt due to his brother, he was ship-

wrecked and narrowly escaped from drowning. He was then only a catechumen; and on reaching the shore in safety he anxiously desired to receive the sacrament of baptism. But finding that the bishop of the place was a schismatical follower of Lucifer of Cagliari in Sardinia, he deferred it till he found elsewhere a Catholic bishop, from whose hands he received the grace of regeneration, which he preserved inviolate till his death.

The see of Sirmium had become vacant, and the empress Justina, who then resided there with her son Valentinian, endeavoured to obtain the election of an Arian bishop. S. Ambrose went down from Milan to prevent it, and filled the episcopal chair for the time, and presided at the election. The excitement being very great, an Arian virgin rushing forward from the crowd tried to pull him down from the seat. He rebuked her, and bid her fear the judgment of God. She died on the next day. The Arians were struck with terror; and Anemius a Catholic was peaceably elected.

In 381 a council, consisting chiefly of Italian and Gallican bishops, assembled at Aquileia to examine the charges brought against Palladius and Secundianus, two Arian bishops of Illyria. S. Ambrose was the chief leader in the deliberations; and after hearing their defence, the synod condemned them, and declared its approval of the creed of Nicæa. S. Ambrose wrote an account of its proceedings to the Churches.

A council met at Rome in 382. While there, S. Ambrose was asked by a noble Roman lady to

offer the sacrifice in the oratory of her house. A poor paralytic was cured by touching his garments. S. Jerom was present at the same council.

The emperor Gratian was put to death by his soldiers, in the following year. He was then in the prime of life, and much beloved by the people. The murderers made choice of Maximus, formerly a lieutenant of Theodosius in Britain, to succeed him. He fixed his residence at Treves, then a capital city of Gaul, and associated his son Victor with him in the empire. S. Ambrose undertook a journey to Treves, to negociate a treaty of peace with him, on behalf of the youthful emperor Valentinian and his mother. The saint spent the winter of 383 at Treves, but refused to communicate with Maximus. Ithacius bishop of Sossuba was then at court, using all his influence to persuade the emperor to inflict capital punishment on the Priscillianists, a sect which had sprung up in Spain about the year 380. Their novel opinions resembled those of the Manichees and some of the Gnostic sects: their conduct also was highly scandalous. Maximus had referred their cause to the council of Bourdeaux, but they had appealed from it to him, and their deputies were then at Treves. Though engaged in the Catholic cause, Ithacius was not a man of reverend demeanour, nor did he bear the feelings of mildness and pity towards the heretics which became his office. He eagerly demanded sentence of death against them from the emperor. S. Martin of Tours was then at court, on an errand of mercy in favour of some poor criminals, and he interceded for the Priscillianists also, and obtained a promise from the em-

peror that their lives should be spared. But as soon as he was gone, Maximus recalled his promise and condemned Priscillian and the leaders of his party to death.

The Pagan senators made an attempt about this time to set up again the altar of Victory in the senate house, and to revive some of the rites of their worship. S. Ambrose wrote an eloquent letter to Valentinian, against granting them leave to do this.

The treaty of peace which he had been employed to make with Maximus afforded the empress Justina leisure to be avenged on the bishop for his interference in the election of the chief pastor at Sirmium, which she had never forgiven, and for his general support of the Catholic cause against her influence. During the life of Valentinian her husband and of Gratian she had not dared to show her resentment, but now an opportunity offered. As the feast of Easter, 385, approached, she sent to the bishop of Milan to demand that the Portian basilica without the walls of the city, and afterwards that the new basilica which was larger, should be given up to her for the use of the Arian worship. The councillors of state were the bearers of the order; to which S. Ambrose returned answer that the bishop has no power to give up that which belongs to God. It was on the Friday in Passion week that the demand was first made. On the next day the pretorian prefect came into the church where S. Ambrose and the people were, and repeated the demand for the Portian basilica. The people cried out to forbid it, and the officer retired to report his reception to the empress.

On the following day, which was Palm-Sunday,

after the lessons from holy Scripture and the sermon, S. Ambrose was explaining the Christian Faith to the catechumens in the baptistery, when one came to tell him that officers had been sent from the palace to fix up the imperial hangings in the Portian basilica as a mark that it belonged to the emperor; and that the people were flocking thither in great numbers. Notwithstanding this intelligence, he began the mass, as usual. During the sacrifice news were brought that the people had got Castulus, an Arian priest, into their hands. S. Ambrose began to weep bitterly, and to beg of God to prevent bloodshed; or, if it must be, that his own might flow for the people and for the heretics. He sent some of his priests, who delivered Castulus from the hands of the populace.

The Court treated this behaviour as seditious, and imprisoned many of the wealthy tradesmen, and fined them each two hundred pounds of gold. They declared their willingness to pay double the sum for the preservation of the Faith. Terrible threats were denounced unless the basilica were delivered up. To the messengers of the emperor S. Ambrose again replied, "If he asked me for what was my own, my land, or my money, I would not refuse it, although all that I have belongs to the poor; but the things which are God's are not subject to the power of the emperor. If he wishes my patrimony let him take it; if my body, I will go to offer it; do you wish to put me in irons, to lead me to death? I rejoice. I will not stir up the people to rescue me; neither will I fly to the altar, begging for life; rather would I be sacrificed for the altar." He was entreated to appease the people; to which he answered, "It

depends on me not to excite them; God alone can appease them." The whole of that day he passed in the basilica, but retired to his own house at night.

He rose early before daybreak and entered the basilica, which was surrounded by soldiers. They were for the most part Catholics, and allowed him free liberty to come and go as he pleased, but declared that their orders were to guard the church where he was. He excommunicated them, and some of them entering the church to beseech him to remove the sentence alarmed the women. But the soldiers cried out that they were come to pray to God, and not to fight. The people seized the opportunity to remonstrate modestly but firmly; We pray the august emperor; we do not fight, we do not fear; we only entreat. The people in the other basilica anxiously besought the bishop to come to them, but he remained where he was, and preached from the book of Job, which was read in the office of Holy Week, as it still is in the Greek Church. From the history of the patriarch he recommended patience. While he was preaching he was informed that the hangings had been taken down from the Portian basilica, and that the church was full of people who were waiting for him. He thanked God for the happy change, and sent some of his priests, but refused to go himself. The report was without real foundation; some children in their play having torn down the veils which marked the place set apart for the emperor had given rise to it. Presently the imperial secretary came to remonstrate with the bishop for having sent priests to the basilica. He declared that he had abstained from going himself, because he had no power to deliver

it up, and he was determined to offer no active resistance, which he probably feared his presence might excite. But when he heard that the imperial hangings had been taken down, he had sent his priests, thinking that the emperor was then favourable. The Catholics spent that day in great sorrow, and the whole of the following night S. Ambrose passed with the people in an oratory of the basilica, within the same enclosure as the great church. For the basilica included many buildings, halls, and galleries, so that the people could eat and sleep within it. It still remained surrounded by the soldiers.

Thus matters continued till Maunday Thursday. On that day S. Ambrose preached from the prophet Jonas, and held out hopes in his sermon, that sinners would be reclaimed to penitence. While he was speaking, news arrived that the soldiers had been withdrawn, and that the fines had been returned to the citizens. The joy of the people burst forth in acclamations of thanksgiving. The soldiers themselves hastened to convey the news, and threw themselves before the altars, kissing them in token of their peaceful inclinations. S. Ambrose wrote to his sister Marcellina an account of all that had happened. She had written to him from Rome, urging him to firmness. He told her that he foresaw further troubles.

Justina, provoked by the determination of S. Ambrose, persuaded her son in January 386 to pass a law making the assemblies of the Arians legal, and forbidding the Catholics to interfere with them, on pain of death. Benevolus the secretary of state, then only a catechumen, refused to prepare such a law, and

was deprived of his office and retired to Brescia, his native city. The principal framer of this law was Mercurinus a Scythian, the Arian bishop of Milan, who in honour of the predecessor of S. Ambrose had taken the name of Auxentius.

S. Ambrose also received a command to appear before the emperor, and plead his cause against Auxentius, his rival; or else to leave Milan. By the advice of the bishops then in Milan, he prepared a remonstrance, in which he cited the oft-repeated declaration of the elder Valentinian, that none but bishops should be the judges of bishops. He protested also in the strongest terms against the recent law. The people, fearing that he might be carried off by force, guarded him for some time in the basilica night and day. Several attempts were made upon his life by the order of the empress. The emperor again sent soldiers to prevent all egress from the basilica. This second persecution in 386, like that of the year before, happened during the season of Lent. S. Ambrose, thus shut up with the people, comforted them with his discourse; he also taught them to chaunt the psalms and hymns antiphonally, or in alternate choirs; a practice which he borrowed from the Eastern Church. From Milan it soon spread over the whole of the West. Some of its original peculiarities are still preserved in the church of Milan. S. Ambrose also composed many hymns for the use of the people, some of which are sung at this day in the ferial office of the Latin Church.

While this persecution still lasted, though not with the same strict confinement as formerly, S. Ambrose was about to dedicate the basilica which

ground without a pillow. Upon her, and on all penitent souls, Jesu have mercy!

To them whose pride and glory here
Lies buried in Christ's sepulchre,
To pass from this our sky-arched room
Is but a leaving of the tomb.
If sensual leanings first shall cease,
Then to go hence is but release.
When alms and prayers have gone before,
And daily strivings to be poor
Disrobe us of mortality,
And in the heart's core breed that sigh
Which pierces heaven, and from above
Brings down the pledged immortal love.

Baptistery, p. 187.

---

MARCH 21.

## S. Benedict, Abbat.

543.

S. Benedict, the great founder of the ascetic life in the West, was born in the environs of Norsia a city of Umbria in Italy, about the year 480. Of his father Eutropius, and his mother Abundantia, nothing is known, except that his family was honourable. He was sent in his youth to study in Rome; but he soon became alarmed by the vice of the young men his companions, and secretly retired to Sublacum, in Italian, Subiaco, about forty miles distant, where he shut himself up in a narrow cave. On his way thither he met Romanus, a holy monk, whom he informed of his purpose, and who clothed him in a monastic habit, and assisted him as he was able.

During three years this charitable monk used daily to visit the cave where S. Benedict lived, and carried to him a portion of his own food. No one else knew his place of concealment. The cave was near the top of a very steep rock, and from the side on which the monastery of Romanus lay it was inaccessible; so he tied the bread which he had brought to a cord, and rang a little bell to let the saint know that he was come. He afterwards went into Gaul, and became superior of a monastery near Auxerre, where he rests.

In his retreat S. Benedict lost all note of time, so as to be ignorant even of the season of the year. On one occasion on Easter-day, it was revealed to a holy priest at a distance, while he was preparing his own repast, that S. Benedict was faint with hunger, thinking that the fast of Lent still lasted. The father went to him, and told him of the arrival of the joyous feast of the Resurrection, and they took their refection together. Even in this life of solitude and heavenly contemplation, the saint was not entirely free from the assaults of the Evil One. He was once so nearly overcome by the remembrance of a woman whom he had formerly known in Rome, as to be on the point of quitting the desert, and returning to her society. But by the might of prayer and severe austerities the tempter was subdued.

The shepherds in that wild region at first mistook the saint for a wild beast, all covered as he was with skins; but when they came to know who he was, they held him in the highest veneration; many of them came to him for instruction, and by degrees left off their savage manners.

As the sanctity of his life became known, many resorted to him to hear his discourse. Some of these were persuaded to renounce the world, and to embrace the monastic profession. The Abbat of Vicovarro, a monastery between Sublacum and Tibur, being dead, the brethren went to him, and besought him to become their superior. He refused for a long time, but at last yielded to their entreaties and left his solitude. He found the monks addicted to many irregularities, which he diligently applied himself to correct; and this he did so unsparingly that in a little time they forgot their former admiration of him, and tried to cut him off by poison. When the cup which contained it was presented to him to be blessed, according to the custom of the monastery, he made the sign of the cross over it, and it was immediately shivered in pieces as if a stone had fallen into it. The man of God perceived the cause; and rising, he said calmly, God forgive you: why do you treat me thus? Did not I tell you that we should not suit one another? Go seek a superior with whom you can agree. And so saying he returned to his cave.

After this he became still more celebrated for his holy life and his many miracles. The number of his disciples so rapidly increased that he built twelve monasteries, in each of which he placed twelve monks under a superior. A few who had most need of instruction he kept with himself. These houses were afterwards united in the monastery of S. Scholastica, which is considered the most ancient of the order. Roman nobles would sometimes entrust him with the care of their

children; thus Equitius sent his son Maurus, and the patrician Tertullus his son Placidus, then a child. This boy was miraculously saved from drowning by the saint.

A priest named Florentius became envious of the renown of S. Benedict, and invented many wicked slanders regarding him. For the sake of peace he retired from Sublacum with a few monks; and as he travelled onwards, he arrived at Cassino, a small town in Campania standing on a high mountain. Here he found a temple of Apollo in a sacred grove, to which the peasants used to resort for worship. He destroyed the idol, cut down the wood, and on the site of the temple erected an Oratory in honour of S. John Baptist, and began to preach the faith to the people. He afterwards built the Monastery of Monte Cassino, which has become renowned throughout the world. It is the most celebrated house of his order; the date of its original foundation was probably about the year 529. Here he composed his famous Rule, and employed the succeeding years in training his monks in the path of perfection, in founding new houses, and in devout aspirations after a better life.

In 542 Totila, king of the Goths, passing through Campania desired to see S. Benedict; and was so overawed by the presence of the holy monk that he fell at his feet. Benedict raised him up, and conversed with him about many things which he foretold would happen to him.

One day the saint was visited in his cell by Theo-[illegible]bus, a former convert, who found him weeping. [illegible]sked the cause, and was told that it was the

foresight which the saint had of the destruction of his monastery by the barbarians; and that he had hardly gained by his prayers the lives of the brethren. This came to pass about forty years afterwards, in an incursion of the Lombards.

S. Benedict had a sister named Scholastica, who had been consecrated to God from her infancy, and whose sanctity is commemorated in the Western Church on the 10th of February. She lived in a convent not far from Monte Cassino, and once a year they met in a house near the gate of S. Benedict's monastery, and spent a day in praising God and in holy discourse together. One day, they had passed the time in this manner, and as evening drew on they were sitting at supper, when Scholastica said to her brother, I pray you to stay this night, and let us commune of the heavenly joy till the morrow morning. He replied that he could on no account be absent from his enclosure for a night. Scholastica laid her head down on the table and began to pray to God with abundant tears. Presently so terrible a storm of thunder and rain came on that no one could venture out of shelter during the whole night. The saint and his sister spent the time in heavenly discourse, and in the morning they parted. Within three days after, God took her to himself, and Benedict as he sat in his cell seemed to see her soul ascending to heaven in the shape of a dove.

He gave thanks to God for her happy passage, and caused her body to be removed to his own monastery and laid in the tomb which he had prepared for himself; that, as S. Gregory says, the

grave might not separate their bodies whose souls had ever been one in God.

The saint himself did not long survive. He foretold his decease to some of his disciples; and six days before it, he desired that his tomb might be opened and made ready for him. A violent fever seized him, and on the sixth day he was carried into the oratory of the convent, and there strengthened himself by receiving the blessed Body and Blood of our Lord. And raising his hands to heaven, in the arms of his children he yielded up his spirit on the 21st March 543, being the eve of the Sunday of the Passion, which is the fifth in Lent.

His departure was made known on the same day to two monks at a great distance, in this manner. They beheld a bright pathway leading from the monastery heavenwards; and as they looked, a venerable person asked them for whom this was prepared. They answered that they could not tell. It is the way, replied he, that the holy Benedict beloved of God has just passed to heaven. He was buried in the oratory of S. John Baptist; and his tomb, as well as his cave at Sublacum was afterwards famous for miracles. S. Gregory the Great in the second book of his Dialogues has given a history of the life of this saint, which he learnt from four of his disciples who had been eye-witnesses of all that he relates. In the same year in which he departed, S. Maurus, one of his monks, carried his institute into Gaul, and founded the Abbey of Glanfeuil. On his way he heard of the decease of his father.

The RULE of S. Benedict, which is the foundation of the constitutions of his numerous order at this day, is described by S. Gregory as "distinguished for its wisdom, and rich in language. If any one would know particularly his manner and his life he may find in the institution of that Rule every act of his government; for the holy man could by no means teach otherwise than he lived." The following is a short summary of the RULE.

Benedict distinguished between Cenobites, who lived in a community under an Abbat, and Anachorites, or Eremites, who after long training in a community retired to live alone in a more perfect life. Besides these he mentioned with disapprobation Sarabaites, who lived two or three of them together without any Rule; and Gyrovagi, who wandered from one monastery to another, and lived in idleness.

In winter—from All Saints' day till Easter—S. Benedict enjoined his monks to rise at two in the morning, to say the *Vigils*, or as it is now called the *Nocturnal Office*, or *Matins*. The Abbat himself, or a very exact brother, was to awaken the community. At this hour Christ was born, and He was taken and mocked by the Jews; at this hour also He spoiled the grave, for He rose before the morning light. From Easter till All Saints no hour was fixed for the *Vigils*, but they were to be said in time that *Matins* or the second office, now called *Lauds*, might always begin at daybreak.

The *Vigils* consisted of a certain number of psalms and lessons from the Holy Scriptures and the writings of the Fathers, with their responses; followed by the Ambrosian Hymn, as it was called. In summer,

the nights being short, no lessons were read, but one from the Old Testament was repeated from memory. On sundays the brethren rose earlier; and besides the psalms and many more lessons than on other days three canticles from the prophets were sung. The abbat intoned *Te Deum* after the last response. On festivals the same order as on sundays was observed, only the psalms and lessons proper to the feast were sung. If any time remained after the end of the *Vigils* till the beginning of *Matins*, it was employed in learning the Psalter, in reading, or in meditation.

The office of *Matins* at daybreak was nearly similar. Christ often resorted to the Temple at this time, as S. Luke says[1]. It was then that He was led before Pilate; and that He appeared to S. Mary Magdalene and the other women after His resurrection. After these offices a certain time was devoted to mental prayer.

At 9 o'clock the office of *Terce* was said. At this hour the Saviour was condemned.

The office of *Sext* followed at noon, when He hung on the Rood, and when the sun hid his face at so shameful a sight.

*None* was sung at first at half-past 1, but in later ages at 3 o'clock, when the Lord yielded up His spirit, and when He went up visibly into Heaven.

At 6 o'clock *Vespers* followed. At this hour the Saviour, on the day before He suffered, instituted the adorable Sacrament of His Body and Blood; and when He was taken down from the cross He was laid in the tomb of Joseph.

[1] Ch. xxi. Ver. 38.

*Complin* was the last office of the day; it was sung at 7 o'clock in the evening; the same hour at which He agonized in the garden, and at which He appeared to His disciples on the evening of His resurrection, saying "Peace be unto you."

It does not appear that Mass was said on working days, but on all sundays and festivals.

The rest of the day was spent in work and reading. In summer the brethren went out to labour at 6 o'clock, and remained till 10, when they returned to the monastery and employed the time till *Sext* in reading. Dinner followed; after which they reposed for a little, or passed the time in silent reading, till *None*. They returned to work after *None* till the evening. In winter they began the day with reading till 8 o'clock, and after *Terce* they went out to work till *None*. They then took repose or studied. In Lent the reading lasted till *Terce*, and they worked till half-past 4 in the afternoon. On sundays it occupied the whole day. Those who were employed in work at a great distance from the monastery said their offices at the appointed hours, kneeling where they happened to be.

During Lent they took no food till the evening. In the Paschal time—from Easter till Trinity Sunday—they dined after *Sext*, and took supper in the evening, but always by daylight. From Trinity Sunday till the 13th September they dined after *Sext*, except on Wednesdays and Fridays, when they fasted till after *None*, unless hindered by hard work or excessive heat. During the rest of the year they did not dine till after *None*. A book of instruction was read while they took their refection.

Two portions of dressed food were set before each monk, of which he was to choose one; and to this was added another of fruits or vegetables from their own garden. Their daily allowance of bread was 12 ounces, and of wine a *hemina*, which was probably equal to three draughts. But abstinence from it was recommended. The abbat might increase or diminish the allowance on extraordinary occasions. The flesh of four-footed animals was forbidden, except to the sick. At table the monks served each other, and they cooked their repasts in turn. They entertained guests with great charity and hospitality, lodging them in a separate house, and maintaining them at the abbat's expense.

The habit of the Benedictine monks was regulated by the abbat according to the climate. In temperate countries it consisted of a cowl and a tunic; the cowl, which covered the head, being thicker in winter, and lighter in summer. At work, instead of the cowl they wore a scapulary, which was at first broader and shorter than at present. This was in earlier times the dress of the peasants and of the poor generally. Each monk had two tunics and two cowls. The colour of the Benedictine habit was not prescribed; but it has usually been black, and hence the brethren of this order are known by the name of the Black Monks.

Their beds were of quilted straw, with a blanket of serge, a coverlid and a bolster. A lamp burnt all night in the dortoir, or sleeping-place, and an old monk had charge of the behaviour of the community. They slept in their habit, not laying aside even their girdle of leather or serge, that they might rise more readily

to the *Vigils*. After *Complin* they never spoke, and a deep silence was preserved during the whole night. The sick were carefully tended in a separate chamber, and a brother was appointed to take care of them.

During the daytime the monks rarely spoke to one another. No mention is made of recreation in their Rule. Without the permission of the abbat no letters or presents were received. They never left enclosure except on an errand of business, and then always two of them in company. Before they went they commended themselves to the prayers of the community; and on their return they lay prostrate during the office in the choir, to expiate the offences that they might have committed in their absence. They never repeated any thing which they had heard without.

The brethren were at first simple laics; and it does not appear that S. Benedict himself was ever a clerk. If a priest asked admission into the monastery he bound himself to conform to the Rule, and in all things to obey the abbat, after whom he had the next place of honour. He also gave the benediction, and presided at the offices, if the superior desired him. But in chapter he took his place according to his entrance into the house.

Postulants remained at the gate for four or five days; they were then admitted into the guests' house; and after a little time to the society of the novices. Their vocation was strictly examined, and the difficulties of the religious life set before them. At the end of two months the Rule was read to them; and again at the end of six months, and finally when the year of probation was finished. If they still de-

sired admission they were then received. Their profession was made in the oratory in presence of the community. They promised steadiness, change of manners, and obedience. If possessed of goods, they gave them to the poor or to the monastery by a formal deed.

When a brother transgressed the Rule he was privately admonished by the elder brethren, twice; then once in public, and if he still continued obstinate he was punished by fasts and scourging at the discretion of the abbat. In extreme cases he was excommunicated. This sentence cut him off from the society of his brethren; and he became the special charge of the superior.

The abbat was chosen by the community, and ordained by the bishop or the other abbats. He ought to be well instructed in the law of God, and to possess great prudence and charity. Under him was a prior or provost—præpositus. There were also deans —decani—who had each the charge of ten monks, at work and at all times. These officers with the abbat governed the house.

There were also religious sisters who adopted this Rule, and were called Benedictine nuns.

As the discipline became relaxed after some ages, many reforms took place from time to time, which gave rise to several important branches of the order. The foundation of their Rule was always that of S. Benedict, with some additional constitutions of their own. The discipline of these later branches is often much more severe than the original Rule. The chief of these are the Cluniac, founded by Bernon, abbat of Gigni in Burgundy and Odo abbat of Cluni, about

912; the Camaldolian, established in 1009 at Camaldoli near Florence, by S. Romuald, which combines the cenobitical and eremitical life; of Grandmont, instituted at Grandmont in Limoisin about 1076 by Stephen of Auvergne; the Carthusian, founded by Bruno of Cologne, at Chartreux in the diocese of Grenoble about 1080; the Cistercians, or White Monks, established by Robert of Molesme in Burgundy, at Cistercium or Cisteaux in the diocess of Chalons in the same duchy, in 1098; the nuns of Fontevrault, founded by Robert d'Arbrissel at *Fons Ebraudii* or Fontevrault in Poictou in 1099; the Tironenses, instituted by S. Bernard of Abbeville about 1109; the Grey Brothers of Savigni, by Vitalis de Mortain in 1112, and united to the Cistercians in 1158; of La Trappe in Normandy founded by John de Rancé, in 1664.

The Benedictine is one of the most illustrious orders that have adorned the Church. After all the changes and storms of thirteen centuries it still survives, and before the last destruction of monasteries in France, and more recently in Spain, it possessed thirty-seven thousand houses throughout Christendom. When England was separated from the communion of the Latin Church there were one hundred and twenty-eight houses of this order in it, and twenty-nine in Scotland, including most of the great abbeys, and nearly all the Cathedral priories, in which the bishop filled the place of the abbat, and the community was governed by a prior. A countless number of holy patriarchs and bishops, of saints, emperors, kings and queens, princes and nobles have embraced its Rule; besides the innumerable company of reli-

gious of humbler rank in this world, who within its blessed enclosures have, while yet in the body, anticipated the life of the just made perfect. The services which many of the brethren have rendered to the cause of letters have earned the praise even of those who deem of little value their life of prayer and self denial.

> Thrice happy they who earthly stores have sold,
> Dearer sublunar joys, domestic ties,
> And form themselves into one holy fold,
> To imitate on earth the happy skies,
> With vigil, prayer, and sacred litanies,
> Their souls to heavenly contemplation given,
> While earthly hope within them buried lies,
> Their sole employ to purge the evil leaven,
> And render their cleansed souls a fit abode for Heaven.
>
> Baptistery, p. 15.

# APRIL.

---

## APRIL 3.

## S. Richard, Bishop.

### 1253.

S. Richard was born in the town of Wyche about four miles from the city of Worcester. His father Richard and his mother Alice were of gentle blood. His elder brother offered him the succession to the family estate, but he refused it, and applied himself to study, and attained great fame first at Oxford and afterwards at Paris. He became a doctor of the canon law at Bologna, and on his return to England was elected chancellor of the University of Oxford.

Edmund archbishop of Canterbury, hearing of his fame, appointed him chancellor of his diocess, and he was soon honoured with the friendship of the holy primate. The archbishop, says the historian, delighted in the wisdom and discretion of the chancellor; and he in the sanctity and heavenly conversation of the archbishop. In 1241 God took the blessed Edmund to Himself. He died in exile at Soissy, and was buried at Pontigny in France, where he rests. Richard gave up all his secular employments, and began to study theology in a house of

the Dominicans or Friars Preachers at Orleans, and was in due time ordained priest.

In 1245, Ralph de Nevile, bishop of Chichester, having died, the chapter proceeded by royal leave to elect a successor. Hoping to win the favour of K. Henry III. they chose the archdeacon, an accomplished courtier, but so unfit for the duties of a bishop that Boniface archbishop of Canterbury refused to confirm his appointment; and a court of enquiry, consisting of the primate, Grosteste bishop of Lincoln, and others, having examined the causes of complaint, he was rejected, and Richard de Wyche was chosen in his room. The king was indignant, and confiscated the revenues of the see; but Richard without fear accepted the office, and appealed to Rome, whither he went to plead his cause. Innocent IV. decided in his favour and consecrated him with his own hands. Richard returned to England bearing letters from the pontiff to the king, enjoining him to submit to the decision. The monarch was only the more enraged, and the bishop fell into deeper disgrace at court. The courtiers and even many of the clergy took the king's part against him.

He was reduced to the greatest straits of poverty by the confiscation of his revenues; and when no one else dared to oppose the wishes of the king, Symon de Teringe, a gentleman in his diocess, received him and lodged him in his house. He began to visit his people, going from town to town, and from one village to another, preaching, and ministering the sacraments of the Church. Still he was much oppressed by poverty and the insolence of the

still bears his name, the people besought him to use holy relics, as he had just before consecrated the Roman basilica. He promised to do so, if he could discover relics of the martyrs. The place where the bodies of the blessed brothers and martyrs SS. Gervasius and Protasius were lying was revealed to him in a dream; and on opening their tomb in the basilica of SS. Felix and Nabor, he found sure tokens of their martyrdom, either in the sculptured palm branch, or in the instruments of their death, which in the early ages were usually buried with the martyrs. On examining further, two bodies were discovered, of larger size than usual, with the bones quite entire, the heads separated, and much blood all around. The names and place of sepulture of these martyrs had been long forgotten. They had suffered probably in the reign of Nero, or at latest of Domitian, in the first century. Their remains were reverently gathered in a precious cloth, and laid on a feretory or bier; and in the evening they were borne into the basilica of S. Fausta, where the people watched all night beside them, and where many persons possessed were exorcised. A great concourse of people was assembled; and some old men remembered to have heard the names of the saints in their youth, as of martyrs long since crowned, and to have read the inscription on their tomb. On the second day after, the holy relics were borne in solemn procession into the Ambrosian basilica. A man named Severus who had been blind for some years and was well known in the city, hearing the rumour of this event, requested to be led to the relics, and to be allowed to touch with a handkerchief the feretory where they lay. As

soon as he applied it to his eyes, his sight was restored. This miracle took place amidst a vast assembly of people. S. Augustin, afterwards the renowned bishop of Hippo in Africa, was an eye-witness of it, and mentions it three times in his works. Severus had formerly been a butcher, but out of gratitude for his cure he devoted himself to the service of God's altar in the basilica. Many other miracles were wrought at the same time, for the confirmation of the faith of the people, amidst the trying scenes of persecution which they were passing through. Similar cures attended the holy apostles; the sick, and those possessed with evil spirits, sent handkerchiefs and aprons to touch the body of S. Paul[1]; and the shadow alone of S. Peter passing across their bed was sufficient to restore health[2]. The bones of Elisha could revive a dead man, who had been cast into his tomb[3]. In none of these instances were the living or the dead bodies of the saints more than the instruments chosen by Almighty God to make known His power. In all of them the Church recognizes His hand alone.

S. Ambrose gave thanks to God for His mercy, and laid the bones of the blessed martyrs under the altar, "Let the victims," he says, "be borne in triumph into the place where is Christ the Sacrifice; but He upon the altar Who suffered for all, they beneath the altar who are redeemed by His Passion." The Arians accused the saint of having suborned men to feign disease; and denied that the relics belonged to true martyrs. These objections he refuted in several discourses, in which he showed that the difference

[1] Acts xix. 12. [2] Ib. v. 15. [3] 2 Kings xiii. 21.

of their faith from that of the martyrs and of the Catholic Church was the true reason of their suspicion. Dr. Cave, in his Life of S. Ambrose, says, "The truth of these miracles is abundantly testified by S. Ambrose, S. Austin and Paulinus who were all then upon the place; and indeed they were notoriously evident to the whole city and twice the subject of S. Ambrose's sermons. I make no doubt but God suffered those to confront the Arian impieties, and to give the highest attestation to the Catholic cause, so mightily at this time opposed, traduced, and persecuted[1]." Such was the effect of these miracles that the persecution shortly afterwards ceased. The emperor Maximus also interfered in behalf of the Catholics.

It was during those days of trial that the conversion of S. Augustin took place. The history of his life we shall consider on the day of his feast—the 28th of August.

In 387 S. Ambrose went again to Treves to demand the body of Gratian, and to renew the treaty with Maximus, who was then threatening Italy with an invasion. He refused the saint a private audience, such as bishops were then always privileged to ask. S. Ambrose therefore in full council declared the reasons of his coming, and openly reproved the emperor for his injustice towards Valentinian. He also refused to communicate with him or with any of the clergy of his court. Maximus reproached the bishop as being the only obstacle to his free passage into Italy, and ordered him to depart from Treves. In

[1] See also *An Essay on the Miracles of the Early Ages*, by the Rev. Mr. Newman.

the end of the same year the emperor crossed the Alps, and came to Aquileia. Valentinian and his mother fled to Thessalonica, to Theodosius. Italy and Africa thus fell into the hands of Maximus without even a show of resistance. Theodosius nobly espoused the cause of the young emperor, and used his influence at the same time to bring him back to the true faith. He led an army against the usurper, who was defeated and slain in 388. The winter of that year Theodosius passed at Milan. S. Ambrose reproved him for an order which he had given to an Eastern bishop to rebuild a Jewish synagogue which had been burnt, as some said, at the instigation of the bishop. The saint first wrote him a letter, but finding that it had no effect, he publicly rebuked him in the church of Milan, and refused to proceed with the sacred mysteries till he had given his solemn promise to revoke the order.

While Theodosius was at Milan, on a great festival he approached the altar, as was usual, to make his offering, and remained within the sanctuary. S. Ambrose sent to inquire if he wanted any thing, and desired the archdeacon to inform him that none but clerks were allowed to be there. The purple, he said, makes princes, not priests. The emperor pleaded the custom of the church of Constantinople, but immediately withdrew. S. Ambrose assigned him an honourable place without the sanctuary. On his return to the East, after making his offering he was retiring from the altar, when the bishop invited him to remain. He replied, "Hardly have I learned the difference between the imperial authority and the priesthood; hardly can I find any one to teach me

the truth; Ambrose alone deserves the name of a bishop."

In a council which met at Milan in 390 the Ithacians and the heresy of Jovinian were condemned. The Catholics did not lend any countenance to the Priscillianists by thus censuring their opponents, the followers of the bishop of Sossuba; but they protested against the cruel and unchristian means which they used to suppress the heresy. Jovinian taught, contrary to the doctrine of S. Paul and of the Catholic Church, that virgins, widows, and married women, who are baptized, possess the same degree of merit, if their lives are otherwise equally virtuous; that those who are regenerated in Baptism with full faith can never fall away by the temptations of the devil; that there is no difference between abstinence from food and using it with thanksgiving; and that those who have preserved the grace of their baptism will have an equal reward in heaven. S. Jerom has refuted these errors in his treatise against Jovinian.

In 390, the people of Thessalonica having broken out into open riot, and murdered some of their military officers, S. Ambrose and the bishops interceded for them, and obtained their pardon. But in an evil hour Theodosius was persuaded by Rufinus his chamberlain and others to retract his promise, as affording a dangerous example of leniency. The market-place was surrounded with soldiers, during the meeting of a public assembly, and seven thousand persons were put to the sword. Theodosius was absent from Milan when the news of this massacre arrived there; but on his return Ambrose withdrew

into the country, and wrote a letter to him to recall him to his duty, and to exhort him to penance. He declared that he could not offer the Sacrifice if the emperor were present in church. Theodosius thus remained excommunicated for eight months. When the feast of the Nativity was come, he sat in his palace weeping. Rufinus asked him the cause of his grief; and he answered that the temple of God was open to slaves and beggars, but to him it was shut, and with it the kingdom of heaven. Rufinus offered to go to the bishop and plead for him, but the emperor replied that it would be in vain, as his sentence was just, and he had no regard for the imperial authority in an action committed against the law of God. Rufinus still urging him, Theodosius gave him leave. S. Ambrose rebuked the chamberlain for leading his master into crime and then presuming to beg forgiveness for him. He repeated his resolution rather to die than to admit the emperor into the church. Theodosius was on his way to second the entreaties of Rufinus when the words of the bishop were reported to him. Notwithstanding he went on, and presented himself before S. Ambrose in the hall of audience, and begged him to give him absolution. The bishop ordered him to perform a public penance, and enjoined him to make a law that thirty days should always elapse between the sentence and execution of a criminal. Gratian had enacted a similar law, some years before.

When Theodosius was at last admitted into the Church, he fell prostrate before the altar, crying out, My soul cleaveth to the dust, O quicken me accord-

ing unto Thy word. The people wept and prayed with him, and he was publicly absolved. The sorrow for his sin he bore with him till his death.

S. Ambrose made the administration of penance among all ranks a chief object of his care. "When any one confessed," says Paulinus, "he shed so many tears as to oblige the penitent to confess; for he seemed to have fallen with him." It was thus that many spiritual directors in later ages, as S. Philip Neri, would sometimes obtain for the dry hard heart of their penitents the grace of tears.

In 392, on the eve of Pentecost, the youthful emperor Valentinian was murdered at Vienne in Gaul by one of his chief officers, at the age of twenty. Not long before he had sent for S. Ambrose to come and baptize him, for since the death of his mother he had embraced the Catholic faith. The bishop was on his way to Vienne when he heard of his death. His remains were carried to Milan, where S. Ambrose pronounced his funeral oration, and offered up the holy Sacrifice for the repose of his soul. He consoled the ladies his sisters, who were much distressed because their brother had died before receiving the sacrament of regeneration. S. Ambrose assured them that the emperor had done all that was in his power to obtain it; and prayed God to grant him the grace which, while alive and in health, he had desired. "Are the martyrs then," he said, "not crowned when they die before baptism? If they are washed in their blood, this prince was washed in his piety. Give me the holy mysteries; let us pray for his repose with a tender affection. Let us make our offerings for his dear soul."

Eugenius usurped the vacant throne. S. Ambrose reproved him for his crime, and left Milan to go to Bologna, where he assisted at the translation of the holy martyrs Vitalis and Agricola. He then went to Florence where he performed many miracles; aud returned to Milan as soon as Eugenius had marched to meet Theodosius. He was defeated soon after, and the pious emperor returned public thanks to God for his victory. S. Ambrose went to Aquileia to meet him, and to beg for mercy for the captives. Theodosius on his return to Milan abstained from the sacred mysteries for a time, lest he should pollute them by approaching with hands unpurified from the blood shed even in a just war. He entrusted his young children to the care of S. Ambrose, and departed to a better life, in the beginning of the year 395, at Milan. On the fortieth day after his decease the bishop delivered his funeral oration. This was done in some places, with special commemoration of the departed, on the third and thirtieth days after their death; at other times, on the seventh and fortieth. In the same year, S. Ambrose discovered the bodies of the martyrs SS. Nazarius and Celsus, in a garden near Milan. Their relics were carried in procession to the church of the Apostles, near the Roman gate.

In 396 a show of wild beasts was exhibited at Milan by Stilico, the guardian and chief minister of the young Emperor Honorius. A poor criminal named Cresconius, who with others had been condemned to them, escaped, and took refuge in a church. The Arians willingly lent their aid to the soldiers; and he was dragged forth to the amphi-

theatre, in spite of the remonstrances of the clergy. S. Ambrose lay for a long time on the ground before the violated altar, weeping. The sacrilegious persons were severely wounded by two leopards; and Stilico made amends to the Church by releasing Cresconius. On another occasion, during the reign of Gratian, S. Ambrose had obtained a free pardon for a malefactor who had been condemned to die for speaking ill of the emperor. He also resisted an imperial order for appropriating a treasure which a pious widow of Pavia had given to the Church.

The holy bishop was often asked to hear and settle disputes, and to decide on the guilt of accused persons. As in the instance of Indicia a pious virgin, the friend and companion of S. Marcellina, who was falsely accused of having broken her vow. He made her accusers perform a public penance, and proclaimed her innocence to the whole Church. He showed the most scrupulous care in examining the qualifications of his clergy, rejecting some whose demeanour seemed unworthy of the sacred office. Many of his priests rose afterwards to the episcopate. He had a monastery near Milan, which was under the care of a very learned and holy priest. One of the last public acts of his life was the consecration of Honoratus to the see of Vercelli. It had been long vacant; and he went down and urged the clergy to elect a fit person to fill the see. His care of the Churches within his jurisdiction was unceasing. As we read of all the men of God in every age, his humility was very great, and his love of prayer and of silence. The heavenly spirit which dwelt in him overflowed in charity towards all, and

in abundant pity towards the penitents and the heretics. It showed itself in his very countenance, as S. Augustin remarked.

The fame of the saint was even in his lifetime spread over distant countries. From Persia some noble sages came to visit him: the king of the Franks had a high regard for him, and publicly declared his opinion of the good fortune of a nobleman who claimed his friendship. Fritigil, queen of the Marcomanni, sent to him for instruction in the Christian faith; she afterwards came herself to Milan, but the bishop was then with God.

A few days before his last illness, Paulinus, the historian of his life, was sitting by him while he was dictating a commentary on the forty-third psalm, the forty-fourth in the English Psalter. He saw a small shield as of flame playing around the head of the saint, and his face shone with a supernatural brightness.

At length he fell sick; and Stilico, fearing that if he were taken from the Church at that time his loss would be irreparable, entreated all his friends to persuade him to pray for his own recovery. While they were standing around his bed he said, I have not lived among you so that I am ashamed to live, nor do I fear to die, for we have a good Master. As he lay at one end of a long gallery four deacons were conversing at the other end, in a low whisper, about a fit person to succeed him. They named Simplician; he called out, He is old but good. They were so much alarmed that they fled from the chamber. Simplician was his successor.

While the saint lay on his bed waiting for his

change, he seemed to see the Lord Jesus coming to him with a pleasant countenance, as he told the bishop of Lodi. From five o'clock till midnight on Good Friday, he lay motionless, his hands stretched out in the form of a cross; and his lips moving as if in prayer, though the words were inaudible. At midnight, as Honoratus bishop of Vercelli was resting in a chamber above, he heard a voice saying thrice, Rise quickly, he is departing. He hastened down, and gave him the Body of our Lord; Which as soon as he had received he gave up his spirit, early in the morning of Holy Sabbath, the 4th April 397. He had filled the see of Milan twenty-two years, and had lived fifty-seven.

At the same hour and before daybreak they carried his body into the great church, where it lay during the following night, the vigil of the Resurrection. The baptized persons saw it as they passed from the font. Some said that it seemed to be walking; to others it appeared to be sitting in the bishop's chair; and in the sight of many, a star seemed to hover over it. They pointed out these mysterious things to their sponsors, but they could see nothing. To those only whose inward vision had been cleansed by the heavenly washing of baptism was it given to behold them. In an irreverent age the very mention of them may be deemed a breach of holy reserve.

After the Sacrifice on Easter-day, the body of the saint was borne into the Ambrosian basilica, attended by a vast concourse of Christians, Jews, and Pagans of every rank and condition. The newly baptized held the most honourable place. A multitude of

demoniacs acknowledged the presence of the blessed remains. The people cast handkerchiefs upon the bier to be kept as relics. And there the body of the saint has rested for fourteen centuries and a half, beside his brother Satyrus and his sister Marcellina. Around such a tomb the thoughts of a Catholic love to linger; but who may picture the light of heaven that will illuminate it when the Chief Shepherd shall return to awake the sleeping dust of his saints, and to reward their undaunted confession of His Name with the eternal vision of His Blessed Face?

I forbear to enumerate the many wonderful events which attested in the sight of eye-witnesses the favour which this holy bishop had with God. Those who reverently desire to be made acquainted with them will find them related in the histories of his life.

Among his great works are the treatises *on Virginity*, *on the Faith*, and *on the Incarnation;* the *Hexaemeron*, or six days of Creation; commentaries on various parts of holy Scripture; a book on the Offices; besides many sermons and hymns, which he certainly wrote, but among which are often inserted others which are spurious. We have already heard his testimony borne to many holy practices and doctrines which at this day are deemed by some modern theologians obsolete, and even contrary to the spirit of the primitive ages. Let us hear, as his parting words, the witness which he bears to the teaching of the Church in his day, regarding the ineffable Gift which our Lord bestows on His disciples in the blessed Sacrament of the altar. In his discourse to the catechumens *on the Mysteries* he says, "Perhaps you will say, I see another thing,

how then do you assert to us that we receive the Body of Christ. How many examples shall I use? Let me prove that It is not what nature formed It, but what the blessing has consecrated It; that greater is the power of the blessing than of nature, for by the blessing the nature itself is changed." After citing the instances of the rod of Moses becoming a serpent, and the water flowing from the rock in the desert, he proceeds, "Let me establish the truth of this mystery by the example of the Incarnation. For was it according to the order of nature when the Lord Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary? It was contrary to the order of nature. And this Body Which we make is from the Virgin; why then do we ask that the order of nature should be in this Body of Christ, when the Lord Jesus was born of the Virgin supernaturally? This is the very Flesh of Christ which was crucified, which was buried; this Flesh is truly the Sacrament. This Sacrament which we receive is made by the word of Christ. But if the word of Elias had such power as to bring down fire from heaven, shall not Christ's word avail to change the species of the elements? We read of the work of the whole world, He spake and it was done, He commanded and it was created. The word of Christ then, which could of nothing make what was not, cannot it change those things which are, into what they were not? For it is not less to give a new nature to things, than to change the old[1]."

The feast of S. Ambrose is kept in the Latin and Greek Churches on the 7th December, the day of

[1] De Mysteriis, ch. ix.

his ordination. In the English Church it seems always to have been observed on the 4th April, the anniversary of his blessed departure. He is generally accounted one of the four great doctors of the Latin Church, with Jerom, Augustin, and Gregory the Great. It is doubtful whether the Ambrosian Rite at Milan was compiled by him, or whether it was named in honour of him when it was first used in his church. The present Rite differs in some things from that which prevailed in the time of the saint, and in others it is the same. Changes were made in it in the end of the eighth century, under the influence of Pope Adrian I. and of Charlemagne, who used great efforts to abolish it entirely. Since then it has not been altered.

To thee an eye to trace out the third heaven
   In holy writ, and see the mercy-throne,—
A brother's love,—a poet's lyre was given,
   But yet o'er all thy gifts the Pastor shone,
   To God's high altar bound, no more thine own.

I see thee stand before the injured shrine,
   While Theodosius to thy stern decree
Falls down, and owns the keys and power divine ;
   For kings that fain her nursing sires would be
   To the Eternal Bride must bend the knee.

I see thee throned upon the Teacher's seat,—
   And 'mid the crowd a silent wanderer steal ;
In his sad breast, while sitting at thy feet
   The Father doth the Eternal Son reveal,
And Austin from thy hands receives the Spirit's seal.

Cathedral, p. 287.

APRIL 19.

## S. Alphege, Archbishop and Martyr.

1012.

S. Alphege was born of a noble family in Britain about the year 954. While he was still very young he renounced the world, and notwithstanding the tears and entreaties of his mother retired into the monastery of Dersherste in the county of Gloucester. After a time he became abbat of the religious house at Bath. The discipline had been very much relaxed before his coming, and the irregularities of the monks gave great offence. His efforts to restore order were unceasing; and at last the sudden death of one of the most irregular alarmed the consciences of the rest, and they all submitted to the government of the saint.

On the death of Ethelwold, bishop of Winchester, in 984, disputes arose between the monks and seculars regarding his successor. S. Dunstan, who was then primate of England, was directed, as some historians say, by S. Andrew to appoint the holy abbat of Bath to the vacant see. He carried with him the austerities of the monastery into the episcopal palace, and was a pattern of sanctity and self-discipline. His chief care was for the poor of his diocess, and he pleaded their cause so irresistibly both by words and by example, that it was said there was not a beggar in the whole of his diocess during his episcopate. "Behold the Jew and the Pagan!" he would cry; "observe how they are bound together in the ties of their religion; see how none of them are oppressed

with penury, whom they do not immediately relieve with money. But they behold us destitute of this virtue, to which the pagans are drawn by a natural pity, and the Jews by Divine command: and they blasphemously revile Christ, and the faith and religion of Christians, and their hopes of the future beatitude." The poor he would frequently exhort to practise the humility and patience of Christ.

In 1006 Alfric archbishop of Canterbury died, and S. Alphege was chosen to succeed him. He went to Rome to receive the pallium; and on his way was robbed by the inhabitants of a town which he passed through. A fire shortly after broke out and consumed many houses: and the guilty consciences of the inhabitants interpreting this event as a mark of the Divine displeasure, they sent after the holy man, and restored his money, begging his forgiveness and his prayers. He was honourably received by the reigning pontiff, John XVIII. and dismissed with his blessing. Before he left Rome to return to England he was favoured with a foresight of the premature death of his successor in the see of Winton which he had obtained by simoniacal means.

The humility and charity of this holy archbishop soon endeared him to the English Church. "He wept," says his historian, "for the sins of all; and for the salvation of all he daily offered the life-giving Sacrifice." The fervour of his devotion and his great love for the honour of God's house, particularly on days of high solemnity, when he celebrated the Christian mysteries in his gorgeous pontifical attire, excited the piety and reverence of all who saw him.

During his primacy, a provincial synod of the

bishops, nobles, and clergy of the kingdom was held at Engsham or Oenham, and many canons were enacted for its spiritual and civil government. A less important council also met at Haba.

In 1010 the Danes made another invasion into England, and as King Ethelred was a weak and unwarlike prince, they found little opposition to their progress. They laid waste the central counties, burning and destroying towns and villages as they passed, and among other places the university of Oxford suffered severely. In the end of the year 1011 they laid siege to Canterbury. Alphege sent frequent messages to entreat their mercy and forbearance; but they pressed the siege so vigorously that in twenty days the city was reduced by famine to the greatest straits, and soon after fell into their hands, as some say by the treachery of Elmeric the archdeacon. The savage fury of the conquerors burst forth without controul; men, women, and children were inhumanly tortured and massacred in the streets. The archbishop could endure the sight no longer, and rushed from the enclosure of Christ Church where the monks had taken refuge, pleading with the furious soldiers for the lives of his people. They immediately turned their cruelty against him, and after torturing him they thrust him into prison where he lay for several months. The priests and religious and the inhabitants of the city were slaughtered by a new process of decimation, in which every tenth man only was spared. Those who could purchase their lives were allowed to go free. In this way Godwin bishop of Rochester seems to have

escaped. Leofruna abbess of S. Mildred in the Isle of Thanet was murdered.

The Danes had not been long masters of Canterbury before a pestilence attacked their army, and they began to repent of their cruelty, and entreated the archbishop to assist them. By his prayers, and by the distribution among the sick of bread which he had blessed, the pestilence was removed. Yet their avarice prevented them from setting the holy man at liberty till he should pay as his ransom sixty talents, or about three thousand pounds of silver. He was carried to Greenwich at the time of Easter, and payment of this money was publicly demanded from him. He refused to levy so large a sum on the lands of the church, which are the property of the poor, and cited the example of the holy deacon S. Laurence, who consented to die rather than commit a similar sacrilege. And he boldly warned his enemies of the anger of Almighty God which would surely overtake them if they continued obstinate in their cruelty. They were so enraged that they fell upon him on the spot, and stoned him to death, and one of them, who, as it is related, had not long before been confirmed by him, finished his life by a stroke of his battleaxe. As his soul was departing he cried, Jesu receive me in peace and forgive them. This happened on the 19th of April 1012, within the Octave of Easter. Miraculous signs of his acceptance with God immediately appeared, and so moved the Danes that they allowed his body to be borne with every mark of honour to the Cathedral church of S. Paul in London, where it was buried.

In 1023 King Canute was prevailed on by his pious Queen Emma to make amends for the cruelty and sacrilege which his father had committed. He removed the holy body of S. Alphege to Canterbury where it was laid in a noble tomb, and the Cathedral church was enriched by many costly gifts of the king and queen. His relics were long preserved there till the dispersion of those memorials in later ages.

Lanfranc, afterwards archbishop of Canterbury, was in doubt whether S. Alphege might be considered a true martyr, as he died in defence of no part of the Christian Faith. He consulted S. Anselm, who replied that he was indeed a martyr, for he had given his life for the sake of justice, and his sanctity had been attested by the evidence of miracles. The history of his life was written in 1070 by Osbern, a monk of Canterbury.

Our Lord the path of suffering trod.
And since His sacred blood hath flow'd,
'Tis meet that man should yield to God
The life he owed.

No shame to own the Crucified,
Nay 'tis our immortality
That we confess our God who died,
And for Him die.

Fill'd with this thought with patient smile
Threatening and death he doth withstand,
Fights, Lord, Thy cause, and leans the while
Upon thy hand.

Seeing above the golden crown,
Into death's arms he willing goes;
Dying he conquers death; o'erthrown,
O'erthrows his foes.

Hymn from Parisian Breviary, p. 281.

APRIL 23.

## S. George, Martyr.

303.

THE true history of this glorious martyr is so obscured by tales and false legends that it is now impossible to know any thing certainly regarding him. The council of Rome assembled by Gelasius in 494 condemned his acts as apocryphal and even in some parts forged by the heretics to throw discredit upon his name; but included the saint among the other martyrs of Christ. His name occurs in one of the martyrologies of S. Jerome. And in the sacramentary of S. Gregory, a proper preface is appointed for his feast. It is this: "It is very worthy, just, becoming, and salutary that we should always and everywhere give thanks to Thee O Holy Lord, Almighty Father, Eternal God: through Christ our Lord, for the venerable confession of Whose name the blessed martyr George endured divers torments, and overcoming them was found worthy of the crown of immortality; through Whom the angels laud Thy Majesty, the dominions adore, the powers tremble, heaven and the heavenly virtues and the blessed seraphim in united exultation celebrate; with whom we beseech Thee let our voices also be admitted, in humble confession saying." The martyrology of the venerable Bede commemorates him on the 23d April, and concludes in these words, "At last S. George truly finished his martyrdom, by decapitation, although the gests of his passion are numbered among the apocryphal writings."

"Although the history of the sufferings of S. George," says Tillemont quoting the words of Usuard, "is placed among the apocryphal writings, this does not hinder the Church of God from honouring this saint among the martyrs, and from ever having a particular veneration for him, as for one of the most illustrious." And, "In the sixth age though his body lay in the east his power and glory were famous in the west. Churches were built in his honour; and at this day the name of S. George is very celebrated among the martyrs. Whole nations revere him as their patron, delight to take his name, and to give it to their country."

The Greek Church has for many ages honoured S. George with the titles of the Great Martyr, and of Tropæophorus, or the Trophy-Bearer, and observes his festival as a holiday of obligation when servile work is forbidden.

Some historians have not scrupled to assert that this holy martyr was the same person as George the Arian bishop of Alexandria, who was murdered by the people in 360. This opinion Selden the learned antiquary thus condemns. "The martyrdome of our S. George is placed under Dioclesian about two hundred and ninety years after Christ; that rage of the people in murdering him of Alexandria, after 360; So that there intercedes seventy yeres betweene them. Why should we now begin so to confound into one these two, who for above thirteen hundred yeres time have in both Churches with all publick attestation been kept so severall, that as the one was highly worshipt for a saint and martyr, so the other hath bene remembered only as a most wicked here-

tick, and most different in his life, dignity, death, and age from the other[1]?" Heylin also, an Anglican doctor in the seventeenth century has devoted much labour to prove that S. George was a true martyr.

There is some reason to believe that he suffered at Nicomedia in the Lesser Asia about the year 303, under the persecution of Dioclesian. He was by profession a soldier, and confessing Christ was taken before Datianus the governor, by whose orders he was beheaded on the 23d April. In a church bearing his name, between Rama and Lydda or Diospolis in Palestine, his relics were said to be lying in the tenth age. Many churches were dedicated in his honour in every country of Christendom. S. Gregory the Great repaired one in Rome; S. Gregory of Tours mentions his name as celebrated in Gaul in the sixth century. Many nations in the east take him as their tutelar saint, as the Georgians; and many cities also of the east and west, as Genoa.

There is reason to believe that K. Arthur in the sixth age placed the picture of S. George in his banner[2]; and according to the testimony of Selden, the martyr of Nicomedia was the patron of England in Saxon times. The same writer remarks how natural it is to suppose that a warlike nation as the English should very early adopt as their patron so distinguished a warrior and holy martyr as S. George. The council of Oxford in 1222 commanded his festival to be observed in England as a holiday of the lesser rank. S. George is said to have appeared in aid of the armies of the cross under Godfrey de

[1] Titles of Honour, p. 818.

[2] Ashmole's *History of the Order of the Garter.*

Bouillon, and also in the expedition of K. Richard I. against the Saracens. Hence some account for his great fame in Europe—but without any good reason, for he was known in the west long before the Crusades. His encounter with a dragon, in which he is usually represented, is wholly symbolical of the triumph of the Christian hero over the power of evil, which S. John beheld under the image of a dragon.

S. George is also the patron of many orders of knighthood in various countries. The most illustrious of these is the most noble the Order of the knights of S. George in England, commonly called Of the Garter. It was instituted by K. Edward III. probably soon after the battle of Creçy in 1346. This prince was a devoted lover of all feats of chivalry, and we shall search in vain for a more perfect example of the knightly character than in his son Edward Prince of Wales, best known as the Black Prince, from the colour of his armour.

K. Edward chose as the patrons of his order the Holy Trinity, the blessed Virgin Mary, S. George, and S. Edward the Confessor, whose name he bore. To the blessed Virgin the knights companions were bound by the statutes to pay singular devotion, and on her five festivals they wore above their robes a small golden image representing her.

The new order was called Of S. George, and the companions were styled Knights of S. George. It consists of twenty-six knights companions including the Sovereign of England who is always the superior; thirteen canons of the chapel of S. George in Windsor; and twenty-six poor knights who are ve-

teran soldiers in straitened circumstances; besides these there has been admitted into the order in later years an unlimited number of foreign princes chiefly of the petty German states professing the Protestant religion. None are to be admitted as companions who are not of honourable descent, knights, and free from dishonourable stain. In the statutes revised under K. Henry VIII. it is said to have been instituted "for the honour of God and the exaltation of the Catholic faith, joined with piety and charity; in establishing a college of religious men to pray for the prosperity of the Sovereign of the order, and the knights companions, and to perform other holy duties; as also for ordering sustentation for a company of alms knights who have not otherwise wherewith to live."

The officers of the order are the prelate, who is always the bishop of Winchester for the time being; the chancellor, who is the bishop of Salisbury, the diocesan of S. George's chapel, Windsor; the register; garter king at arms; and the usher of the black rod.

The habit consists first of a garter of blue velvet on which is embroidered the motto **Honi soit qui mal y pense.** The garter was chosen as symbolical of unity and society, and the motto expresses the unblameable integrity that should distinguish the companions. The common story of the first use of this motto, and of the original institution of the order is wholly without foundation. The next part of the habit is a mantle of blue velvet having the shield of S. George, argent a cross gules, embroidered on the breast, surrounded with the garter; a

surcoat and hood of crimson velvet lined with white taffeta, and a cap and feathers. These were all the parts of the original habit; till K. Henry VIII. added to them the collar, composed of twenty-six garters enamelled, with roses and mottoes; united by knots of gold. From this hangs the figure of S. George on horseback in armour subduing the dragon, enamelled and ornamented with jewels.

The annual feast of the order begins on the eve of S. George and lasts for three days [1].

The chapel of S. George at Windsor, which is also the chapel of the order, was begun in the reign of K. Edward IV. and was not finished till 1516 under K. Henry VIII. On the same site there was formerly a chapel dedicated in honour of S. Edward the Confessor, in which K. Henry I. placed eight secular priests. K. Edward II. appointed to it thirteen chaplains and four clerks. And in 1352 K. Edward III. made it a collegiate church for a dean, twelve canons, thirteen minor canons and other assistants [2].

With the name of S. George is associated the memory of all that is glorious in the martial annals of our country, when the war-cry of **S. George for England**, was the signal of victory on the fields of Creçy and of Agincourt. And in earlier times, when the flower of British knighthood led their armies to the rescue of the holy Sepulchre of the Redeemer, the name of S. George was their unfailing watchword. His cross is emblazoned on our Union-flag at this day, surmounted by that of S. Andrew for

[1] Ashmole.

[2] Dugdale's *Monast. Angl.* and Tanner's *Notitia Monastica.*

Scotland. And though to allude to deeds of earthly glory may seem foreign to the contemplations which engage us in this book, yet the institution of Christian chivalry here claims our regard for a few moments. The name has been too commonly applied to one period of European history, though even those writers who thus confine it are at a loss to explain its existence before that time, which they do not attempt to disprove. Others do not hesitate to maintain that it never existed at all, except in brilliant fictions. And many who turn with a mournful interest to its imperishable records in the history of the past, are tempted to say, that alas! the age of chivalry is gone. But "in opposition to these opinions," says the author of the Broad Stone of Honour, "I shall endeavour to show that chivalry, in some form or other, is coeval with human society, and that it must continue to exist with it till the end of time; but that under the influence of the Christian religion it is infinitely ennobled, and even assumes many general features wholly new.

"The error which leads men to doubt of this proposition consists in their supposing that tournaments and steel panoply and coat arms and aristocratic institutions are essential to chivalry; whereas these are in fact only accidental attendants upon it, subject to the influence of time, which changes all such things, new moulding them into a countless diversity of forms, to suit each race of new-born fancies. In the common acceptation of the word, chivalry, as a learned French writer observes, 'did not create a new system but it only extended and refined an old.' Chivalry is only a name for that general spirit or state of mind

which disposes men to heroic and generous actions, and keeps them conversant with all that is beautiful and sublime in the intellectual and moral world. It will be found that, in the absence of conservative principles, this spirit more generally prevails in youth than in the later periods of men's lives; and as the heroic is always the earliest age in the history of nations, so youth, the first period of human life, may be considered as the heroic or chivalrous age of each separate man; and there are few so unhappy as to have grown up without having experienced its influence, and having derived the advantage of being able to enrich their imaginations, and to soothe their hours of sorrow with its romantic recollections. The Anglo-Saxons distinguished the period between childhood and manhood by the term "cnihthade," knighthood; a term which still continued to indicate the connexion between youth and chivalry, when knights were styled children as in the historic song beginning "Child Rowland to the dark tower came;" an excellent expression, no doubt; for every boy and youth is in his mind and sentiments a knight, and essentially a son of chivalry. Nature is fine in him. Nothing but the circumstance of a most singular and unhappy constitution, and the most perverted and degrading system of education, can ever wholly destroy the action of this general law; therefore as long as there has been, or shall be, a succession of sweet springs in man's intellectual world; as long as there have been, or shall be, young men to grow up to maturity, and until all youthful life shall be dead, and its source withered for ever, so long must there have been, and

must there continue to be, the spirit of noble chivalry[1]."

Not even among pagan nations was this heroism wanting, as the poems of Homer and other ancient records can testify. But, as the same eloquent writer remarks in another of his works, "S. Augustin in two lines reveals the whole difference between the Christian chivalry and the ancient heroic character, but it is a separation as wide as between heaven and earth; 'for the latter' he says, 'did not love glory on account of justice, but seemed to love justice on account of glory[2].'"

Those who see the shadow of heavenly things in earthly, and Christ in all, trace the principles of a common nature in the institution of chivalry and the discipline of the spiritual life. The same simplicity of faith and practice, the same temperance and constancy, the same spirit of sacrifice and of sincerity and of the utmost love, and the same reverence and affectionate devotion are the very life of the one and of the other. And the same significant emblems, as the fierce giants, and dragons, and enchanted castles, under which the ancient chroniclers pictured the dangers that beset the path of the knight, may fitly represent the perils which lie in the way of the spiritual champion. In the Cross of their Lord both find their safety, and the sign and security of final victory. And thus by things of this world, and which even at first seemed as if they would lead us into strange and

[1] Broad Stone of Honour, 1829; *Godefridus*, p. 89.
[2] Mores Catholici, b. vi. c. 9.

wayward paths, have we been brought back to the contemplation of things unseen and eternal.

And on his brest a bloodie Crosse he bore,
The deare remembrance of his dying Lord,
For whose sweete sake that glorious badge he wore,
And dead, as living ever, Him adored :
Upon his shield the same was also scored,
For soveraine hope, which in His helpe he had ;
Right, faithful, true he was in deede and word,
But of his cheere did seeme too solemne sad
Yet nothing did he dread, but ever was ydrad.

Faërie Queene, B. I. c. I. 2.

# MAY.

## MAY 3.

## Invention of the Holy Cross.

326.

The event commemorated by the Church on this day is one which provokes the incredulous smile of those who presume to limit the power of God; nevertheless it is attested by S. Cyril of Jerusalem, S. Ambrose, S. John Chrysostom, Rufinus, Sulpitius Severus, S. Paulinus, Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret. All of these writers agree in their testimony regarding the discovery of the Cross, although in several minute circumstances they vary, as no independent historians can fail to do. S. Helena, widow of the emperor Constantius Chlorus, and mother of Constantine the Great, was honoured by God on this occasion. She had been converted to the Christian faith in 311 soon after her son, when she was about sixty-three years of age. Fifteen years afterwards, she made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, to visit the scenes of our Lord's passion and resurrection. But Jewish and Pagan profaneness had effaced nearly every trace of them. The holy Sepulchre had been filled up with earth, and paved over, so as to leave no mark where it had been, and

on its site a temple of Venus had been built. The Emperor Adrian had also built a temple of Jupiter near the same place, that the Christians might no longer pay their devotions at the sacred spot. The Jews had buried the Cross on which the Redeemer died, along with the other instruments of His passion, near the place where He suffered, as was their custom with criminals; the demon rejoicing, as S. Ambrose remarks, to hide from the eyes of men the sword with which he had been pierced. The Christian writers say that this long concealment was designed to save those precious instruments from the malice of the enemies of Christ, till His disciples were able to guard them, and pay them becoming honour.

S. Helena then in 326 was seized with an anxious desire to recover the Cross, and to remove the profane buildings which covered the places where the Lord's blessed footsteps had been. But she found the search most difficult, for no one then living had ever heard of its place of concealment. As the best means of finding it, she made careful inquiry at the oldest inhabitants, both Christians and learned Jews, as to the probable place of the sepulchre. Having been directed to the most likely spot, she levelled all the buildings which stood upon it, and ordered the earth and rubbish to be removed till the old soil should be laid bare. After digging to a great depth, the Sepulchre was discovered, and on examining, further, three crosses were found, and the title fixed to one of them, as some of the historians say, though according to the greater number it was lying separate from the crosses. The number of the nails which

were found at the same time has been variously stated, but it seems probable that there were four, as the feet of a person who was crucified were generally supported by a board to which each foot was nailed separately. No mention is made of the nails of the two thieves, and hence probably they are usually represented as bound to their crosses. This may perhaps explain the necessity which the Jews were under to hasten their death by additional violence, though it is by no means necessary to suppose that they were not nailed, in order to account for this. The history which describes the title as detached from the Cross, proceeds to record the difficulty which was found in distinguishing among the crosses which was the Lord's. Macarius bishop of Jerusalem proposed that they should be carried to a sick lady in the city, not doubting that God would honour the wood of the Redeemer's Cross by restoring her to health. And it happened as he had expected.

S. Helena thus rewarded for her reverent care, "adored in this sacred wood," says Tillemont quoting from St. Ambrose, "not the wood itself, which would have been the error of the heathen, but the King of Heaven Who had been fixed to the wood." She sent a portion of it to Constantine, which was removed to Paris in the thirteenth century during the reign of S. Louis. The rest she enclosed in a rich case, and entrusted it to the care of the bishop of Jerusalem. He from time to time exposed it to the devout veneration of the faithful, and distributed small portions of it among them. S. Cyril and S. Paulinus testify that it remained undiminished by

the loss of these fragments [1]. She herself carried to Rome a large portion, which she deposited in the church of the Holy Cross of Jerusalem which she had built. On the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross we shall learn what afterwards befel that portion of it which remained at Jerusalem. The title was also sent to Rome, where it was again recovered in 1492. Of the nails, S. Helena placed one in a diadem for her son, enriched with pearls; another, or according to some historians two others, she fixed in the bridle of his war-horse, as a protection in danger; and the third was thrown into the Adriatic to allay a storm. Regarding the finding of the lance, the reed, the sponge, and the crown of thorns, there is less certainty, though S. Gregory of Tours affirms that he had seen them.

A stately church was built by the emperor on the site of the Sepulchre. It was called the Basilica of the Holy Cross, or of the Holy Sepulchre, also of the Resurrection. It was consecrated in 335, the bishops who had sat in the council of Tyre going to Jerusalem to assist at the ceremony. But this event belongs rather to the history of the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. S. Helena returned to Constantinople, and went thence to Rome, where

[1] The miraculous circumstances related of the Cross rest on entirely separate ground from the finding of the Cross itself, and must not be confounded with it. We have no better reason for believing in the existence of Constantiue or S. Helena, than in the principal event which this day commemorates. See the Essay before quoted, *On the Miracles of the Early Ages*, by the Rev. Mr. Newman, pp. cxliii—clxx.

she died on the 18th August in the same year 326; on which day her feast is kept by the Church.

Since the fifth or sixth age the Western Church has kept the 3rd of May in honour of the Finding or Invention of the Holy Cross. It is uncertain whether its discovery was made on this day, whether the vision of the Cross was seen by Constantine upon it, or whether it is the anniversary of the dedication of the Church of the Holy Cross at Rome. The Greeks keep this feast on the 6th of March.

The Cross was once an instrument of the lowest ignominy; but the Passion of our Lord has exalted it to the highest rank of honour and dignity. So that it is now difficult to think of it otherwise than as the Standard of the Captain of our Salvation, surrounded with glory. Far different did it seem to Jewish and Pagan eyes, and even to the dim sight of the mourning disciples, when the Lord of Life hung in death upon it. But when He was gone into Heaven, bearing the very wounds of His Passion, as a perpetual memorial of His sacrifice, the faithful began to know the dignity of the Cross. When they would profess their faith, or would exorcise the spirits of evil, or would bring down blessings on themselves or on others, they traced its holy sign. It seems almost needless to prove this from the testimony of early writers, but the language in which they tell it is often so beautiful, and so full of heavenly doctrine suited to the followers of the Crucified in every age, that I shall add the words of several fathers.

Tertullian, writing in the earlier part of the third century, remarks, "Whenever we set out or advance

on a journey, whenever we come in or go out, when we dress and wash, when we take our food, when we light our lamps, when we lie down and when we sit, whatever employment engages us, we wear our foreheads with the sign of the Cross. For these or such like matters of discipline, if you ask for a law from Scripture, you will find none; yet tradition shall be pleaded to you as their origin, custom has confirmed them, and faith observes them. In defence of the tradition, the custom, and the faith, you will either find a reason, or you will learn it from some one who has already found it[1]."

"Let us not then blush for the Cross of Christ," says S. Cyril of Jerusalem, in the following century, "but if another hide it do thou sign it openly on thy forehead, that the demons, beholding the royal sign, may fly, and may in fear remain afar off. Use this sign both in eating and drinking, in sitting, and in lying down, and in rising from bed, in speaking, in walking, and, in a word, in every thing. For He who was crucified on earth is now above, in heaven. If after His crucifixion and burial He had remained in the tomb, we should have had cause to blush; but He who was nailed to the Cross in this place Golgotha went from the Mount of Olives eastward, and is now ascended into heaven[2]."

Besides urging those who heard him to the constant use of the sign of the Cross, S. John Chrysostom, in the end of the fourth century, adds many

[1] De Coron. Militis. c. 4, quoted by Hooker, Eccl. Polity. B. v. c. lxv. 2.

[2] Catechesis, iv. 10.

reasons why it should be held in great honour; saying, "Let no one be ashamed of this symbol and sign of our salvation. For the Passion of the Lord is the head and origin of all our blessedness, in which we live, and through which we are. With joyful mind let us therefore draw around us, like a crown, the Cross of Christ. For through it are all things consummated which lead to our salvation. For when we are regenerated, the Cross of the Lord is present; when we are fed with the heavenly Food, when we are consecrated in holy orders, everywhere and always this sign of victory is used. Wherefore in our houses, on our walls and windows, on our foreheads and in our mind, let us with great care mark the Cross. For this is the sign of our salvation and of our freedom, and of mercy also and humility. When therefore thou signest thyself with the Cross recal to thy mind the need of the Cross, and extinguish the fire of anger and of all other passions; arm thy forehead with great boldness, and thy soul with a noble freedom. . . . . Be not ashamed of so great a gift, lest when He cometh in His Majesty He shall be ashamed of thee. For then thou shalt see this sign, shining in glory above the brightness of the sun, borne before Christ. . . . . Mark then this sign on thy mind; for this Cross hath converted and healed the whole earth; hath driven away error, and restored truth; hath changed earth into heaven, and of men hath made angels. By it demons far from being terrible are made despicable to men. By it death is changed into sleep, and all things which oppose us are trampled under our feet. If therefore any Gentile shall

ask you if you adore the Crucified, do not hesitate with clear voice to answer, I adore Him, and will never cease to adore Him; and if He smile, pour forth tears for His madness[1]."

S. Augustin thus writes in the beginning of the fifth century, "If we shall say to a catechumen, Dost thou believe in Christ? he answers, I believe, and signs himself with the Cross of Christ. He bears it on his forehead, and blushes not for the Cross of his Lord[2]."

"What have we all known as the sign of Christ but the Cross of Christ?" says the Venerable Bede in the eighth century; "which sign unless it is used on the foreheads of the faithful, or on the water of their regeneration, or on the oil and chrism with which they are anointed, or in the Sacrifice with Which they are fed, none of these is properly performed[3]."

As a fitting conclusion to the testimony of these holy fathers, hear the sublime words of the Preface in the Pontifical, at the blessing of a new Cross.

"It is very worthy and just, right and salutary, that we should always and everywhere give thanks to Thee, O Holy Lord, Almighty Father, Eternal God, Whose holy and dreadful Name, among other visible creatures, fruit-bearing trees do not cease to praise and bless[4]; Who, as a figure of Thy Only-begotten Wisdom, didst from the beginning adorn the paradise of joy with the Tree of Life, to teach

[1] Homily LV. in S. Matth. [2] Tract. 11. in Joannem.

[3] In Evang. Joan. c. xix.

[4] See the Song of the Three Children.

the first parents of our race, by the sacred mystery of its fruit, to avoid death, and to desire immortal life; And Who, after we, by touching the forbidden tree, had become liable to a just death, didst mercifully deign to call us back to life by the innocent death of the Wisdom of God, co-eternal with Thyself, our Lord Jesus Christ: we humbly beseech Thee to vouchsafe to sanctify with Thy heavenly benediction this honourable ensign, which, after the pattern of that first most sacred standard, with which Thou didst triumph by the precious blood of Thy Son, has been prepared and set up by the devotion of Thy faithful people; that to all who here bend their knees, and supplicate Thy Majesty, a greater compunction of heart may be granted, and more abundant forgiveness of offences; and that by the intercession of that most victorious Passion of Thine Only-begotten Son, they may both ask what is pleasing to Thee, and may more speedily obtain what they ask. Grant, we beseech Thee, O most merciful Father, in Whom we live, and move, and are, that as often as we behold with our eyes, and recal to our minds, the triumph of divine humility, which cast down the pride of our enemy, we may receive a courageous boldness to face that enemy, and the greater grace of devout humility before Thee. That in the tremendous day of inquisition of Thy Majesty, when the elements shall tremble, and
changgers of heaven shall be shaken, and that glo-
angels. n of our Redemption shall appear in the
made dee may be worthy to pass from death to
into sleep behold the immortal joys of a blessed
pled unde."

Such was the unvarying teaching and practice of the Church from Apostolic times; none who professed to draw their hopes from the death of Christ refused their humble homage to the Sign of their Redemption. Their devotion to the Cross may be expressed in the words of the blessed abbat of Clairvaux, "Crux in corde, cor in Cruce"—their heart in the Cross, and the Cross in their heart. It was reserved for later ages of the world to behold men, who pretended to have discovered no new way of salvation, openly insult the blessed sign of the Cross which their Catholic fathers had ever revered, because upon it the Sacrifice of our Redemption had been consummated. The bitterest revilers of the Holy Cross are not, as formerly, the pagans and the Jews, but men who bear the sacred name of Christian. "It is not an open enemy," says the Lord in the Book of Psalms, "that hath done Me this dishonour: for then I could have borne it; neither was it Mine adversary, that did magnify himself against Me; for then peradventure I would have hid Myself from him[1]." In the eyes of these men, to use the language of the author of the essay formerly quoted, "the Cross on which Christ suffered is but a piece of wood; and, as they sometimes speak both of it and of the sign of it, it is something loathsome and hateful, bringing our Lord under the curse rather than sanctified by Him[2]."

That there are some great authorities among the modern doctors of the English Church who sanction the pious reverence of antiquity for the Cross, let the following quotations show. "To condemn the whole

[1] Psalm lv. [2] Page cliv.

Church of God, when it most flourished in zeal and piety," says Hooker, "to mark that age with the brand of error and superstition only because they had this ceremony more in use than we now think needful, boldly to affirm that this their practice grew so soon through a fearful malediction of God upon the ceremony of the Cross, as if we knew that His purpose was thereby to make it manifest in all men's eyes how execrable those things are in His sight which have proceeded from human invention, is as we take it a censure of greater zeal than knowledge [1]."

The thirtieth Canon of the English Church, which is especially quoted in the Rubric at the end of the office for baptism in the Common-prayer Book, has these words, "The honour and dignity of the name of the Cross begat a reverend estimation even in the Apostles' time, for aught that is known to the contrary, of the sign of the Cross, which the Christians shortly after used in all their actions; thereby making an outward show and profession, even to the astonishment of the Jews, that they were not ashamed to acknowledge Him for their Lord and Saviour, Who died for them upon the Cross. And this sign they did not only use themselves with a kind of glory, when they met with any Jews, but signed therewith their children when they were christened, to dedicate them by that badge to His service, Whose benefits bestowed upon them in baptism the name of the Cross did represent. And this use of the sign of the Cross in baptism was held in the primitive Church, as well by the Greeks as the

[1] Eccl. Pol. B. v. c. lxv. 11.

Latins, with one consent and great applause. At what time, if any had opposed themselves against it, they would certainly have been censured as enemies of the name of the Cross, and consequently of Christ's merits, the sign whereof they could no better endure. The continual and general use of the sign of the Cross is evident by many testimonies of the ancient fathers."

"I could tell some experimental effects of the sign of the Cross," says bishop Montague in the beginning of the seventeenth century, "some experimented effects of my own knowledge. What if upon diverse extremities I have found ease and remedy by using that ejaculatory prayer of our Liturgy, Per crucem—By Thy Cross, &c., and when I said it, what if, to testify my faith, I made the sign of the Cross? It is true, miracles are ceased, but what if this be none? what, if so ceased, that, notwithstanding, God can, and may, and will, and doth sometimes work miracles in these days? The Cross of our Saviour, in the external sign thereof, being as much vilified by furious Puritans in these days as ever it was by frantic Pagans in those, why may not God, to teach men better manners, and to check this exorbitancy against the Sign of our dear Redeemer's death, do now, as He hath done in the days of old, and show some sign and token to magnify the thing so much despised." Again, "If it be not superstitious to sign in the forehead, why is it to sign any other part of the body? Why more out of baptism than in baptism? Is one part of the body more subject and liable to superstition than another? the breast or arms than is the forehead? What hinder-

eth but that I may sign myself with the sign of the Cross in any part of my body, at any time; at night when I go to bed, in the morning when I rise, at my going out, or at my returning home? The ancient Church so used it out of baptism, and so may we. . . And the same reason which moved them may move us to use it more frequently than we are enjoined, more ordinarily than we do. For we live with Puritans and opposite factionists that have the Cross of Christ in as great contempt and despite as ever had Julian or any Pagan[a]."

Lastly, a voice from the North of Scotland, not long ago speaking with the spirit of Apostolic times, says, "Much good use, with great edification, may be made by this truly primitive practice, when performed with right understanding and devout affection. The sign of the Cross is so short and easy, yet so strong and expressive a symbol of our Christian faith and profession as Christ's enlisted soldiers, that it serves as a remembrancer and recognition, or renewed acknowledgement of the whole grace and whole obligation of our baptism, when first, as the servants of God, we were so marked on our foreheads. We were baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and when in the beginning of our prayers we say, in faith and adoration and worship, In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, making at the same time the sign of the Cross, we declare and strengthen our faith in the undivided Trinity, and

[a] See British Critic, No. LXIV. p. 383. Bishop Montague was appointed to the see of Bath and Wells in 1608, translated in 1616 to Winchester, and died in 1618, aged 48.

Incarnation of God the Son, Who took our nature upon Him, and died upon the Cross to redeem us. The sum of Christian knowledge, our whole faith, hope, and love grow and hang upon the Cross of Christ[1]." "By Faith," says Archdeacon Hare, "S. Bonaventura, being asked in what books he had learned his marvellous wisdom, pointed to his crucifix[2]."

In the Eastern and Western Church the sign of the Cross is still constantly used, in the divine offices, as well as privately. The Anglican Church retains it in the office of Baptism. In the first book of Common Prayer of Edward VI. it is also enjoined in the order for Confirmation, accompanied with these words, "Sign them O Lord, and mark them to be Thine for ever, by the virtue of Thy Holy Cross and Passion. Confirm and strengthen them with the inward unction of Thy Holy Ghost, mercifully unto everlasting life. Amen. N. I sign thee with the sign of the Cross, and lay my hand upon thee; in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." The long-established custom of the Scottish Church, which has not yet been wholly supplanted by the English ritual, preserves this ancient practice in Confirmation.

In the Office for the Communion in the same book, the sign of the Cross is used in consecrating the Holy Eucharist, with these words, "With Thy Holy Spirit and word, vouchsafe to bl✠ess and sanc✠tify these Thy gifts, and creatures of bread and wine, that they may be unto us the Body and

[1] Bishop Jolly's Sunday Services, Good Friday.

[2] Victory of Faith, p. 196.

Blood of Thy most dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ."

### ON A PICTURE OF THE CRUCIFIXION.

Still dost Thou, day and night, silent abide,
Hanging upon the Tree ; and there, in vain,
Pleading Thy bleeding hands and wounded side,
With upturned eye of agony, while pain
Rendeth each tender heartstring. Yet remain
Pride in my heart and foolishness, preside
O'er me at morn, with me at eventide
Sinking to rest. Oh ! o'er my spirit reign !
Teach me each day to bear my cross with Thee ;
And when Night's curtains close, be ever near !
Be Thou my pilot thro' Night's cloudy sea !
Be Thou the silent chariot's charioteer !
And when I sink upon the couch of death,
May I within Thine arms resign my breath !

Thoughts in Past Years, p. 32.

---

MAY 6.

## S. John ante Portam Latinam.

THIS holiday commemorates an event in the life of the blessed Apostle Saint John which is mentioned by Eusebius, Tertullian and S. Jerom. In the second persecution of the Christians under Domitian, in the year 95, S. John was brought from Ephesus to Rome, and by the orders of the tyrant was thrown into a caldron of boiling oil. But, as it has been remarked that those faithful ones who stood by to witness the sacrifice and the martyrdom of the Son

of God were themselves exempted from martyrdom, the saint came out unharmed; and was banished to the Isle of Patmos in the Egean sea, where he was probably condemned to work in the mines. There he was favoured with those visions of the future which are recorded in the Apocalypse. The miraculous deliverance of the holy Apostle took place near the Latin gate of Rome, which led towards Latium.

Thus were partly fulfilled the words of our Saviour to the brothers S. James and S. John, when they declared that they were able to drink of the cup which He should drink; "Ye shall indeed drink of My cup." "Do we ask," says S. Jerom, "how James and John the sons of Zebedee drank of the chalice of martyrdom, when Scripture relates that the Apostle James alone was beheaded by Herod, but that John finished his life by a natural death? But if we read in the ecclesiastical history that John for his martyrdom was cast into a caldron of boiling oil, and was banished into the island of Patmos, we shall see that in will he was a martyr, and that he indeed drank the chalice of confession; as did also the three children in the furnace of fire, although the persecutor did not shed their blood."

A church was built by the Christians on the spot near the Latin gate; and was rebuilt in 772. The feast of this day in honour of it is mentioned in the Martyrology of S. Jerome, in the Sacramentary of S. Gregory, and in other ancient Offices. It was formerly observed in England as a holiday of the second rank, on which agricultural labour alone was permitted.

Two brothers freely cast their lot,
With David's royal Son;
The cost of conquest counting not,
They deem the battle won.

Brothers in heart, they hope to gain
An undivided joy,
That man may one with man remain,
As boy was one with boy.

Christ heard; and will'd that James should fall
First prey of Satan's rage;
John linger out his fellows all,
And die in bloodless age.

Now they join hands once more above,
Before the Conqueror's throne;
Thus God grants prayer: but in His love
Makes times and ways His own.

Lyra Apostolica, p. 32.

---

MAY 19.

## S. Dunstan, Archbishop.

988.

THE exact date of the birth of S. Dunstan it is not easy to determine. It is generally said to have happened in 925, the first year of the reign of K. Athelstan; but from several events in the life of the Saint we learn that it must have taken place two or three years earlier. His father Herstan, and his mother Kyndryde were great in worldly dignity, says the historian, but in the Christian religion they were still

more noble. They seem to have led a useful and a holy life in private; and their son was favoured in later years with a vision of their bliss. His future fame was announced before his birth by miraculous appearances, which are related on good authority by the historians of his life, and which some of his bitterest enemies have not ventured to deny. His parents called his name Dunstan, which signifies the strength of a rock. As soon as his early infancy was passed, they brought him to Glastonbury, and there devoted him to the service of the altar.

At that time the monastic life seems to have fallen into contempt in England, the secular and married clergy having monopolized all the emoluments of the Church; so that those who desired to serve God in the religious life were obliged to go into foreign countries. A congregation of Irish religious had settled at Glastonbury, where they preserved the rule of their venerable founder S. Patrick; and their fame was so great that many of the nobility entrusted the education of their sons to the care of the brethren. In their society Dunstan spent his childhood and early youth. He devoted himself with such ardour to his studies, as to bring on a dangerous illness, which threatened his life. After he had lain insensible for some days, and while the community was watching for his departure, it pleased God to restore him. His first act, on rising from his couch, was to go into the church, and return thanks to God for his recovery. Many wonderful stories are related of him during his residence at Glastonbury, which I shall not venture to mention, lest they should give occasion to the irreverent spirit of the

ignorant or the unholy to deride the power of God. Let it suffice for the veracity of this history to have thus alluded to them. He excelled his companions in his studies, and obtained the love and admiration of all who lived with him.

While he was still a youth, he was recommended to the notice of K. Athelstan, by his uncle Athelm archbishop of Canterbury, according to some, or, as others say, by Alphege bishop of Winchester, surnamed the Bald. The king promoted him to an office in the palace. He would sometimes refresh the royal ear with the music of the harp, after the fatigues of state. But he did not long enjoy the favour of the king; for the courtiers, envious of his accomplishments, accused him of practising forbidden arts, and persuaded Athelstan to banish him from court. On his way he was beset by his enemies, and cruelly beaten, and thrown into a well or cistern, where he was found by some humane persons, who took care of him.

He seems then to have visited Alphege bishop of Winchester, who strongly urged him to the monastic life. But the youthful Dunstan, though still looking forward to the clerical office, was not yet prepared to give up every thing for Christ's sake, and preferred the easier and more joyous life of a secular priest. While his inclinations were still averse from the discipline of an ascetic, he was attacked by another dangerous illness, in which his life was again despaired of. It was then that the ties which bound him to this world were broken, and from that time he was wholly devoted to the life which is hid with Christ in God. When his health was restored, he

took the vows of a monk in the presence of Alphege, who in due time also ordained him priest. He was appointed to the church of the blessed Virgin Mary, to whom his parents had specially dedicated him. S. Alphege the Bald was formerly honoured by the English Church on the 1st September.

The life of S. Dunstan at this time seems to have been eremitical. He made a cell for himself in an unfrequented place, near Glastonbury, five feet long, two and a half wide, and of the height of a man, with one small window and a door. Here he devoted himself, by the help of God, to subdue the remains of earthly passions which yet impeded his course towards perfection. The conflict was often terrible. Whether, like his divine Master and the blessed Antony, he was ever called to a personal struggle with the enemy of man none may now presume to determine. He is so related to have been, by those who have written the history of his life. By prayer and fasting the tempter was finally overcome.

During these years K. Athelstan had died, and had been succeeded, in 940, by his brother Edmund. The new sovereign invited S. Dunstan back to court, but he soon again forfeited the royal favour, and was sent away in disgrace. He probably retired to Fleury, a Benedictine monastery in France, where he first learned the Rule of S. Benedict. The king soon relented, and recalled S. Dunstan; in consequence, as some say, of a vow which he had made when his life was exposed to imminent danger in hunting. Others attribute it to the joyous event of the birth of his son Edgar in 944. On his return

to England, Dunstan was made superior of the monastery of Glastonbury. With the king's assistance he laid the foundations of a more glorious church and convent than the former one, in which he collected a band of devoted monks, and began to develope his plans for the revival of the religious life in England. He compiled a Rule to which the name Concordia Regularis was given. It is principally founded upon the Benedictine Rule. It is a much agitated question whether that rule was ever before adopted in England, or whether S. Austin brought it with him on his mission from Rome. But it is certain that it had fallen into oblivion in England, before its restoration by S. Dunstan. He was the first Benedictine abbat of Glastonbury, which soon became a seminary whence other churches and religious houses were supplied with bishops and abbats.

In 946 K. Edmund was murdered, and his two sons being then infants, his brother Edred succeeded. He had a great esteem for Dunstan, and when the see of Winchester became vacant in 951 by the death of S. Alphege, he pressed the abbat of Glastonbury to accept it. But, though the queen added her entreaties, he could not be prevailed on to do so.

In 955 K. Edred was seized with a mortal illness, and sent for Dunstan, who was his confessarius, or spiritual director; but on the way the saint learnt that he had happily departed, and so commended his soul to the Lord.

Edwy, the elder son of K. Edmund, succeeded his uncle; he was then not more than fourteen years old. He seems to have been a weak and sensual prince, possessing no very decided character of his

own, and easily led astray by those who had gained an influence over him by ministering to his passions. The story of Elgiva and her mother is familiar to all readers, though it is often difficult, in the distorted pictures of it which modern authors of romance and fictitious history have given, to recognize the features of truth. Because S. Dunstan was a monk, and these women were his enemies, their vices are concealed from the eyes of modern readers by the hatred which they bore him, not, be it remembered, because he was so zealous a reformer of ecclesiastical discipline, but because he was a bold reprover of their vices. I do not presume to plead the cause of the blessed Dunstan; his name and character are exalted far above earthly praise or blame. But I am anxious that ingenuous minds should be disabused of the prejudices which a former course of reading may have created. The mother of Elgiva was a woman of shameless character, and of a restless ambition. She aimed at bringing about a marriage between the young king and her daughter, though they were related within the degrees forbidden by the canon law. Meanwhile they lived in open vice; and on the day of his coronation, which was performed by Odo archbishop of Canterbury, while the clergy and nobility were feasting with the king, he left them to enjoy the society of those ladies. The company sent to request that he would return, but he refused. Kinsi bishop of Lichfield, a relation of the king, and S. Dunstan were then deputed to go and remonstrate with him. The abbat sternly reproved the women for their conduct, which had brought the king into disgrace; and placing the

crown on his head he led him back to the banquetting hall.

This freedom was never forgotten; and Edwy was soon afterwards persuaded by Elgiva and her mother to banish S. Dunstan. Their vengeance also fell upon the monastic institutions which at great pains he had been restoring, and which they plundered of such wealth as had been accumulated in the churches. S. Dunstan retired into Flanders, and another was appointed to the abbacy of Glastonbury. He was courteously received by Arnulf Count of Flanders, a descendant of K. Alfred, and found a retreat in a monastery at Ghent. By God's favour he escaped from an assassin who had been sent from England to murder him.

The archbishop of Canterbury exerted his influence with the king, and at length prevailed on him to remove his guilty companions from court. They were then tried by the nobles and banished. Many cruelties are said to have been inflicted on them, and considering that rude age it is probable that these stories are not much exaggerated. But that Dunstan had any share in them no ancient historian has even hinted. And in judging of the character of the saint and his persecutors, even when they were overwhelmed with misfortune, we must remember that crime is effaced not by suffering but by penitence; and that the deepest injuries do not necessarily create feelings of revenge. The punishment which overtook Elgiva and her mother, however severe, ought not to make us forget their offence; and we dare not accuse S. Dunstan of unworthy motives for his conduct, still less of cruelty

and revenge towards his fallen enemies, since the charge is wholly unwarranted by history.

A rebellion shortly after broke out, and the king being unable to make head against the rebels was forced to divide the kingdom with his brother Edgar, taking as his share that part which lay to the south of the river Thames. An assembly of the nation was immediately summoned, which revoked the unjust decrees of K. Edwy against the monks, and recalled S. Dunstan from exile. He returned with great honour, and was promoted in 958 to the see of Worcester. Odo archbishop of Canterbury consecrated him, and foretold that he should one day succeed him in the primacy of England. Dunstan was soon after made bishop of London also, the exigency of the times and the want of fit persons to fill the sees requiring a suspension of the ecclesiastical canons against plurality of bishoprics. He immediately built and endowed a monastery for twelve monks at Westminster.

In 959 K. Edwy died, and his brother Edgar became sole king. S. Odo archbishop of Canterbury departed this life in 961, and Elfinus bishop of Winchester was chosen to succeed him; but dying in the Alps, on his way to do homage for the pallium at Rome, Brithelm bishop of Wells was promoted to the see. He was however found unqualified, and resigned in favour of S. Dunstan, who in obedience to the urgent command of the king accepted the dignity. He went to Rome in 962 to receive the pallium from the hands of John XII. the reigning pontiff. The remains of S. Odo were buried near the altar of the cathedral church of Canterbury, and

S. Dunstan never passed his tomb without kneeling, and saying, May the good bishop Odo rest in peace.

As soon as he was invested with the pallium his anxious care was to supply vacant sees with proper pastors and to carry on his plans for the re-establishment of the monastic life in England. For this purpose he generally appointed monks to the bishoprics. All the secular and married clergy who preferred the pastime of hunting and the pleasures of the world to the duties of their office were by degrees removed, unless they agreed to conform to the rules which were proposed to them, which many of them accepted. It is owing to his zeal in reviving strict discipline in the Church that S. Dunstan has become so unpopular in later ages. For against his private character nothing is alleged.

K. Edgar was in the early part of his reign the slave of ungovernable passions; and having on one occasion grievously offended against the law of chastity, S. Dunstan publicly refused to exchange the courtesies of life with him. When the king was moved to contrition for his offence, the archbishop enjoined him, as a penance, to abstain from the use of his crown for seven years, besides the observance of frequent fasts, and the distribution of large alms. At the end of the seven years Dunstan publicly solemnized his return to the peace of the Church, by placing the crown upon his head, as if in a second coronation.

The plans for the reformation of the clergy did not proceed without serious opposition. The complaints and remonstrances of the secular priests were so loud as to call for the interference of the pontiff

John XIII. by whose command Dunstan assembled a council of the English Church to determine the questions at issue between the monks and the seculars. The place of its meeting is now unknown, but its result was favourable to the cause of the monks. It committed the charge of carrying on the reformation to Oswald bishop of Worcester, afterwards archbishop of York, and Ethelwold bishop of Winchester. They were the chief supporters of S. Dunstan in his labours; and under their care the monasteries rapidly increased in numbers, and the altars were served by a self-denying and unworldly clergy. Their exertions were seconded by K. Edgar, who granted charters and endowments to many religious houses.

The canons of Winchester seem to have been loudest in their complaints, and a synod was assembled there to consider their petition to be restored to their livings. While the council was deliberating, a crucifix is said to have uttered these words, *Absit hoc ut fiat*—It must not be done. The petition of the canons was rejected.

In 975 K. Edgar died; and notwithstanding the opposition of his second queen Elfrida, and a party of the nobility who espoused the cause of her son Ethelred, S. Dunstan and S. Oswald secured the succession and consecration of Edward, the eldest son of K. Edgar, afterwards surnamed the Martyr. In 978 a synod of the clergy met at Calne in Wiltshire to consider once more the claims of the secular priests. While they were sitting in an upper chamber, the floor gave way, except that part where S. Dunstan and his supporters were. From that

day the cause of the irregular clergy declined, and in a little while the plans of Dunstan were carried into full effect without opposition, notwithstanding a last faint show of resistance at the synod of Amesbury.

In 978 K. Edward was murdered by his step-mother Elfrida, to make way for the succession of her son Ethelred. This event is commemorated in the present kalendar on the 18th of March, and the translation of his remains on the 20th of June. The young prince seems to have been innocent of any share in the crime.

S. Dunstan had now seen seven monarchs on the throne of England. As he began to grow old, and found less need for the exercise of his public duties, he applied himself more diligently to prayer, vigils, and austerities. He would often spend whole nights before the altar in the church of the blessed Austin at Canterbury. He was frequently endowed with the spirit of prophecy. Thus on one occasion, after travelling in company with the bishops of Rochester and Winchester, at parting from them he wept, foreseeing their approaching decease. Ethelwold bishop of Winchester dying in 984, S. Dunstan appointed Alphege abbat of Bath to succeed him. His martyrdom in 1012 is honoured in the kalendar on the 19th of April.

The holy Dunstan was favoured with many heavenly visions, which, for the reasons which I have before alluded to, I cannot here relate. On the festival of the Ascension, 988,—the 17th May,—he assisted at the Sacrifice, and preached to the people, after the Gospel, on the glorious event

of the day. He then finished the sacred mysteries, and when he gave the benediction to the people, he told them that the day of his departure was at hand, and besought them to be mindful of him in their prayers. While he spoke, his face was seen to shine with a supernatural light. On the second day after, which was the Sabbath within the Octave of the Ascension, as he lay on his bed surrounded by many of his children in religion, he foretold the calamities which soon after overwhelmed England, in the incursions of the Danes. As the bystanders looked on him, they beheld another of those miraculous manifestations of the divine power by which his sanctity had been frequently attested. He asked for the blessed Sacrament, and after receiving It as a viaticum on his way to God, and commending his soul to His mercy, "he departed to be with Him Whom he had ever desired, and was borne upwards by angels."

His remains were carried into the cathedral church of Christ in Canterbury, and there buried. Afterwards they were removed by archbishop Lanfranc to a more honourable place in the same church. The monks of Glastonbury, out of love to his memory, in later ages boasted that his remains were with them. In 1508 archbishop William de Warham and Thomas Goldstone prior of S. Austin's opened his tomb, and found indubitable proofs that his precious remains had never been removed from Canterbury. Thirty-three years after his death, his feast was appointed by a synod held at Winchester, to be kept throughout England, on this day. The

same synod enjoined the observance of the festival of the blessed martyr K. Edward.

The Abbey of Glastonbury was one of the oldest in England. The ground where it stood was anciently called Ynswytryn, or the Glassy Island, from the clear stream which surrounded it. Its name afterwards was Avallonia. There is a tradition, which is however supported by very doubtful evidence, that it was founded by S. Joseph of Arimathea, in the year 63[1]. But it is certain that it is at least as old as the fifth century, for S. Patrick, on his way from Gaul to his mission in Ireland, found a society of religious living there, probably under a rule resembling the Egyptian. K. Arthur, who died about the year 542, was buried there. Under the Saxon kings it was liberally endowed, but was plundered by the Danes in the ninth century, and reduced to great poverty. S. Dunstan, as we have seen, restored it to more than its former splendour, and introduced the Benedictine Rule, or perhaps only revived it. From that time till the dissolution of the monasteries in the sixteenth century it was one of the principal religious houses in the kingdom. Its superior was a mitred abbat, with a seat in parliament, and enjoyed precedence of all other abbats, till in the year 1154 Pope Adrian IV., who was an Englishman, gave that distinction to the abbat of S. Albans, for the honour of the proto-martyr of England.

[1] See the arguments in support of the tradition, in Cressy's Church History, b. ii. c. 1—8: and the examination of their validity, in Collier's Eccl. History, b. i. pp. 7—12.

The last abbat of Glastonbury, Richard Whiting, was executed as a traitor, on the hill called the Torr, by the orders of K. Henry VIII. because he refused to surrender his abbey into the hands of the royal commissioners. "The learned bishop Godwin," says Collier, "observes that there were but three abbats who had courage enough to maintain their conscience, and run the last extremity; these were the abbats of Colchester, of Reading, and Richard Whiting, abbat of Glastonbury. It seems neither bribery, nor terror, nor any other dishonourable motives could prevail upon these men. To reach them therefore another way, the oath of supremacy was offered them, and upon their refusal, they were condemned for high treason[1]." Two monks suffered with the abbat. The lands and wealth of the house were immediately seized by the commissioners and applied to their own purposes. And now nothing but a ruin remains to mark the site of the monastery which once enclosed sixty acres of ground within its walls. The abbey church was one of the most glorious in the kingdom, and included six chapels, of S. Edgar, of S. Mary, of S. Andrew, of our Ladye of Loretto, of the Holy Sepulchre, and of S. Joseph of Arimathea, in honour of whom, and of the blessed Virgin Mary, the church was dedicated. It also possessed a most valuable library, which astonished and delighted the antiquarian Leland on his visit there, a few years before the dissolution, but of which not a vestige escaped the general wreck.

[1] Eccl. Hist. part ii. b. iii. p. 164.

Why dost thou flee the peopled seat?
Why love the shade and dim retreat?
What seest thou in that silent mood,
Conversing with the solitude?

Thus soars the soul on freer wing
To mansions of unfading spring;
And less to earthly influence given,
Her meditation holds with heaven.

In quietness of sacred love
They present seem with choirs above;
Their thoughts with God for evermore,
To know, to worship, and adore.

What joys Thou dost to them impart,
Who serve Thee, Lord, with stedfast heart!
They seek for Thee the cave unblest;
Thou hid'st them in Thy fostering breast.

Glory to God both Three and One,
The Father, Spirit, and the Son,
The exceeding great reward art Thou
Of them who strive Thy love to know.

Hymns from the Parisian Breviary, p. 312.

---

LIKE travellers of the olden time who, after a day of toil, found welcome and repose within the guest-house of some peaceful convent, and were refreshed during the hours of a wakeful night by the sound of the brethren's holy hymns, and finally dismissed on their way with their benediction, we seem to have arrived within hallowed precincts, and to be invited

to rest awhile and contemplate the mysteries of the life which is hid in God. Time would fail us, did we linger on this delightful ground; nevertheless a few moments shall be devoted to this blessed institution of the Catholic Church—the monastic life.

Regarding its origin, S. Bernard thus writes to the brethren of Mons Dei. "The life of solitude is a thing of the ancient religion, of perfect piety founded in Christ; an ancient inheritance of the Church of God, shown forth from the time of the prophets, and now, when the Sun of new grace has arisen, restored and renewed in John Baptist, and familiarly illustrated by our Lord Himself, and desired by His disciples even when He was present. For, when they saw the glory of His transfiguration upon the holy mount, Peter said, Lord, it is good for us to be here. After the Passion of the Lord, while the recent memory of His shed blood was still warm in the hearts of the faithful, the deserts were filled with persons who chose this solitary life, following the spirit of poverty, and vying with one another in spiritual exercises and in the contemplation of God. Among whom we read of Paul, and Macarius, and Antony, and Arcenius, and many others, men of noble degree in the republic of this heavenly citizenship, names distinguished in the city of God, bearing honourable and triumphant titles from their victory over this world, and their mastery over it, and over their own bodies, and for the discipline of their minds and the worship of the Lord their God. Let them be silent who in darkness would judge of the light, and would, out of the abundance of bad will, accuse

you of novelty, while they themselves might rather be reproached with dotage and vanity [1]."

S. Chrysostom has pourtrayed the blessedness of that life; "Of the false doctrines and impure manners which often drown those who navigate the sea of this life, you shall find none in the monasteries: but although such storms and waves are raging beneath, their inhabitants alone, dwelling in a peaceful harbour and in perfect security, look down, as it were out of heaven, upon the shipwreck of others. For they have chosen a heavenly citizenship, and are in nothing behind the angels. For among them is no inequality of rank, nor do some enjoy good things, while others are in extremest misery; but all share one peace, and joy, and glory. So that there, no one blames poverty, none are honoured for their wealth. Thine and Mine, which turns all things upside down, is wholly banished among them; all things are common, their table, and dwelling, and garments, and, which is most wonderful, there is but one and the same soul among them all. All are noble in the same nobility, all are slaves in the same service, in the same freedom all are free. One wealth belongs to all, which is truly wealth; one glory, which is true glory. For not in name but in deed they possess good things. One joy, one desire, one hope is to all; hence all live and suffer that all may rejoice and be glad [2]."

S. Cyril thus eloquently describes the divine solaces which visit the soul of the monk whom the

[1] Epistola ad Fratres de Monte Dei, De Vita Solitaria.
[2] Adversus Vituperatores Vitæ Monasticæ, lib. iii. c. x.

world deems lonely and sad; "If any one hath left his home, he shall receive a dwelling-place above; if he hath forsaken his father, he shall have a heavenly Father; if he hath separated from his relations, Christ will receive him as a brother; if he hath renounced his wife, he shall find a divine wisdom, from whom he shall derive spiritual fruits; if he hath parted with his mother, he shall find the heavenly Jerusalem, which is the mother of us all. From the brethren and sisters also, who are bound by the spiritual tie of a like purpose, he shall in this life receive a more gracious charity [1]."

Though, alas! in later ages men have discovered another path to perfection than that which the Lord Himself pointed out, when He said, "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell all that thou hast, and come and follow Me;" yet there have not been wholly wanting devout men in the Anglican Church, who have felt the mysterious claim which the religious life has on the admiration of all Christians, and on the imitation of those "to whom it is given." Bishop Montague, addressing the Puritans, who denied the distinction between the precepts and the counsels of the Gospel, remarks on the divine saying which I have just quoted, "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell what thou hast," "It is true I do grant it a counsel and no imperious precept, at least to all men; a kind of mandate, though not properly. And yet you are tied to do it; it is sin to you not to do it, for you are persuaded it is a precept; but you neither obey it, nor will you suffer others to obey it that would;

[1] Catena Aurea, in S. Luc. xviii. 28.

for you would account him a papist that would do it; for such opinion you hold of the ancient monks and ascetics, as S. Anthony and others, that did practise it. . . . . You cannot deny this constant resolution of antiquity. Change therefore your manners or your minds; be papists with me, or rebels without me. If S. Chrysostom and his fellow-ancients be papists, be it so. I am content to be so accounted; for I mean to be a papist with them, rather than a noveller with you[1]."

So also Thorndike says; "though the occasions of the world minister more opportunities of exercising charity, yet the engagements, which a man that liveth in the world hath, make it more difficult for him. In the profession of the monastic life there is ground for presuming that those who live in it come nearer what our baptism professeth, by the means thereof, than others can do."

Let me cite the words of Collier who thus writes, "As to a monastic life, the Church of England has not declared against it in any of her articles: the dissolution of the abbeys in England was an act of the state and not of the Church[2]." And again, "If we consider the matter closely all Christians are bound to strict living, to discipline, to large distributions of charity, little less than the monks. They are false to the engagement of baptism if they manage otherwise. The monastic institutions were principally designed to revive the piety of the ancient Christians, and bring up practice to the rule of the Gospel[3]."

[1] See British Critic, No. LXIV. p. 363.
[2] Eccl. Hist. b. ii. p. 65. [3] Eccl. Hist. part ii. b. iii. p. 161.

In Izaak Walton's Life of George Herbert there is a description of a religious community, which Nicholas Ferrar established in his house at Little Gidding in Huntingtonshire about the year 1630. It was overwhelmed in the storms of the Great Rebellion. A fuller account of it may be found in Peckard's Life of Ferrar.

A sad duty is it to be constrained as it were to plead the cause of an institution which one might have thought needed only to be named, to ensure the affectionate regard of English Christians. But such a duty is unavoidable in ages of religious innovation, and is often necessary in defence of the very holiest mysteries of the faith. In few words then let me answer the objections which are made to the monastic life from the irregular behaviour of some who have professed it. "If in these retirements," says a devout author, "where every thing is so ordered as to be most advantageous for the promoting of virtue and devotion, and nothing be permitted that is likely to prove a disturbance to godliness, or allurement to evil, yet if some—for God be praised, it is far from being the case of the generality—live scandalously, and give ill example to the world, what can be said, but that no state can secure any man; and that no such provision can be made in order to a holy life, but may be abused? But yet it is surely not to be thought that such abuses, and the viciousness of some, can be argument enough to any just and reasonable man, to condemn the whole, and the institution itself. Is not marriage abused an infinite number of ways, and many forced to embrace that state, at least to accept of such particular persons contrary

to their own choice and liking? Is there any state in the world, any condition, trade, calling, profession, degree or dignity whatsoever, which is not abused by some? Are churches exempt from abuses? Are not Bibles and the word of God abused? Is not Christianity itself abused, and even the mercy of God abused? If therefore there is nothing so sacred and divine in the whole world, which wicked and malicious men do not pervert to their ill designs, to the high dishonour of God and their own damnation, how can any one, upon the mere consideration of some abuses, pass sentence of condemnation against a thing, which otherwise is good and holy? It is an undeniable truth that to embrace a life exempt, as much as can be, from the turmoils of the world, and in a quiet retirement to dedicate one's self to the service of God, and spend one's days in prayer and contemplation, is a most commendable undertaking, and very becoming a Christian. And yet if some who enter upon such a course of life as this, fall short of what they pretend, and instead of becoming eminent in virtue and godliness by their exemplary lives, prove a scandal to their profession, is their rule and institution to be condemned; or rather, they who swerve from it? No; let not the dignity of an apostle suffer from the fall of Judas; nor the commandments lie under an aspersion upon the account of those that break them."

I do not here bring forward the nearly unanimous testimony of the modern writers in favour of the secondary advantages which resulted from the monastic life: such as the services which were rendered to

the cause of literature, the daily alms which the poor received at the gates of the monasteries, the moderate rents at which their lands were let, and other benefits of the same kind[1]. For till the ruling and animating principle of the institution is recognized and regarded with love and veneration, there is little hope that the reproach which for three long centuries in this land has rested upon it will be taken away. Neither do I say anything of the recent proposals to use some such institution, albeit widely differing, for the evangelizing of large towns. A society of unmarried priests is not a monastery; and though preaching the Gospel was often undertaken by holy religious of the cloistered orders, yet except in one glorious instance—that of the Dominicans or Friars Preachers—it was a duty additional to their chief occupation of serving God, like the blessed Anna, with fastings and prayers night and day.

But the language of apology seems foreign to the theme of our contemplation, for it supposes hostility and unworthy accusations; and within the breasts of all who would comprehend the mystery of that celestial life, nothing but peace and harmony should reign. At this hour, amidst the tumult of the world, even the perishing ruins of the ancient religious houses seem to be still as it were the home of an ineffable peace, which descends on earth to men of good will. Let the devout heart which mourns over the deserted sanctuaries and ruined shrines which once made the face of England glorious, visit one of those enclo-

[1] See for example Collier's Eccl. Hist. part ii. b. iii. p. 165, 166; and indeed his whole history of the dissolution of the religious houses.

sures, now tenanted by the owl and the raven. What memories does it preserve of ages of faith and charity from this land long since departed! How many generations of holy men and women has it received, who, in voluntary poverty, and celibacy, and obedience, trod the path of saintly perfection, and whose dust now rests within it! How unceasing a death to the world, what daily fasts, and mortifications, and nightly vigils, has it witnessed, what unwearying prayers and praises, how many genuflections before the Sacramental Presence upon the lighted altar, how many tearful aspirations after the beatific vision of the Trinity in heaven! The voice of discord is hushed; even the language of admiration becomes presumptuous; silence and tears are alone befitting the scene. "It is good for us to be here," as the ancient sentence bore, which was inscribed on many Cistercian abbeys, "for a man lives more purely, falls more rarely, rises more quickly, walks more warily, rests more securely, dies more happily, is sooner purified, and is more abundantly rewarded[1]."

Though it is departed from us, yet this blessed life is not dead. The world still beholds with wonder youthful souls bidding farewell to home, and friends, and earthly love, and retiring to sit with holy Mary at the feet of their Lord in devout contemplation, or at other times to attend Him in His poor and sick brethren. The anthem so full of gracious encouragement to the youthful religious is still, as of old, intoned as she draws near to make her last

[1] Weever's *Funeral Monuments*.

solemn vows, *Veni, sponsa Christi, accipe coronam quam tibi Dominus præparavit in æternum*—Come, spouse of Christ, receive the crown which the Lord hath prepared for thee for ever. In the Western and Eastern Churches the religious orders are probably as numerous as in any former age. In the latter communion the bishops are invariably elected from them.

But we are already warned that we have dwelt long enough on this sacred ground, though we seem hardly to have done more than enter upon it. Gladly would we remain to trace the history of each blessed order, and its introduction into England: and the sad narrative of the dissolution of the monasteries in the sixteenth century might furnish a theme of the deepest interest. But other subjects demand our attention, though not before I relate a little tale which Bona mentions in the Divina Psalmodia, and which seems to contain a more touching plea for the religious life than many formal discourses. "Joannes Moschus relates, in his book called the *Spiritual Meadow*, that an old man once came to a brother of one of the orders of Solitaries, and said to him, Tell me, my brother, what have you gained by spending so much time in living alone, and in spiritual exercises? The brother replied, Go away now, and come again in ten days, and I will tell thee. The old man accordingly went away, and returned after ten days, and found that the brother had departed to Christ, leaving a shell on which was written, Forgive me, my father, if, while I was doing the work of God, or was chaunting the psalter at the appointed hours, I never suffered my thoughts

to descend to the earth." With hearts subdued by our late meditations, let us sign our breasts, and proceed.

Lord, if my many sins below
Forbid me here their peace to know,
Grant, when from these my chains set free
I put on immortality,
I may be with them at the close
And find at last their true repose.

* * * * *

For they, I ween, who sleep below
Had more of wisdom than we know;
With alms and prayers and penitence
They sternly conquered things of sense.
And with them in their slumbers deep
Their fastings and their vigils sleep,
And shall awake with them to stand,
When the last judgment is at hand.

Baptistery, pp. 183 and 195.

---

MAY 26.

## S. Augustin, Archbishop.

604.

Nothing is known of the early life of S. Augustin, till he became abbat of the monastery of S. Andrew in Rome, which had been founded by S. Gregory the Great. His sanctity so recommended him to the holy Bishop, that he admitted him, along with a few others, to his most intimate friendship. We have already seen in the life of S. Gregory how ardently he desired the conversion of England to the Christian Faith, and how he would have undertaken the mission

alone, if the people of Rome had not urged their Bishop to recal him. After his promotion to the chair of S. Peter, he accomplished what he had so long desired, and in July 596 the abbat Augustin and a little band of monks and priests were sent from Rome, to carry the gospel into Britain. S. Gregory furnished them with letters of recommendation to many of the bishops in France near whose churches they were to pass, and to the two sons of Childebert, kings of Burgundy and Lorraine, and to their grandmother Brunehaut. On reaching Aix the courage of the missioners failed them at the prospect of so long a journey through strange and barbarous nations, to a country whose manners and even whose language were wholly unknown to them, and they sent S. Augustin to Rome to entreat S. Gregory to allow them to return. But he saw in their discouragement a fresh reason for hope, as if the devil, foreseeing the success of this invasion of his dominions, had raised an obstacle to deter them. The holy Bishop therefore wrote to them, urging them to go on with the great work they had undertaken. "Go forward in God's name," he said, "knowing the glory of the everlasting reward, which shall follow this great labour. Almighty God protect you by His grace, and grant me to see the fruit of your labour in His eternal kingdom." He recommended them to take with them priests from France, to act as interpreters on their arrival in England. For the language of the Anglo-Saxons and of the Franks was very similar, both nations being of German origin.

The missioners then with renewed ardour set forward on their journey, and were received with great kindness on their way through France, by those

persons to whom S. Gregory had recommended them, and to whom he afterwards sent letters of thanks for their charity. The little company landed safely in 597 on the island of Thanet, near the coast of Kent, in number about forty.

The Romans had finally withdrawn their armies from Britain about a century and a half before; and the native Britons, being unable to repel the invasions of the Scots and Picts, had invited the Saxons and the Angli from Germany to assist them in subduing their northern enemies. But they soon found in their new allies a much more dangerous foe. For these warlike nations, discovering the defenceless state of the Britons, turned their arms against them, and in a few years made themselves masters of the whole country, except the wildest parts of Cornwall, Wales, and Cumberland, whither the remnant of Britons had fled to escape total destruction. The conquerors then divided the kingdom into several states, of which, in the end of the sixth century, Kent was the most powerful.

There is very good reason to believe that Christianity was first preached in Britain in Apostolic times. As early as the third century it was honoured with many glorious martyrs. The persecutions of the Roman emperors had failed to extinguish it; and the Saxons on their arrival found the religion of the Cross everywhere prevailing. But "having the odds of power in their hands," says Collier, "they set up their own heathenism, demolished the Christian churches, and suppressed the true worship. The Church lost ground almost every where, was driven, as it were, into a corner, and no where visible to any degree, excepting in those places where the Britons

had still some footing; insomuch that at last heathenism was the prevailing religion[1]."

Ethelbert, or Adilbert, then reigned in the kingdom of Kent. His queen Bertha, or Adilberga, was a daughter of Cherebert, one of the kings of France, and had been educated in the Christian faith. She had obtained leave from the king to enjoy the free exercise of her religion; and Luidard, bishop of Senlis in France, attended her court, as her spiritual director. He is sometimes called the harbinger of S. Augustin.

As soon as the missioners had landed, they sent the interpreters to inform the king that they were come from Rome to bring him good news,—the certain promise of eternal joy, and of a kingdom without end with the living and true God. He invited them to remain in the island, till he should determine what ought to be done for them; and in the mean time provided them with every necessary. The influence of the queen probably obtained for them this indulgence. He soon after went to the island to give them an audience; but would consent to meet them only in the open air, having a superstitious fear of magical charms. They arrived at the appointed place in solemn procession, bearing a silver cross, and a banner on which was represented the figure of our Saviour, and chaunting litanies to obtain from God their own safety, and the salvation of the people they had come among. The king bade them be seated before him, and they began to announce the Gospel to him. When they had finished, he said that those were good words and promises, but, as

[1] Eccl. Hist. B. I. p. 61.

they were to him new and uncertain, he could not at once embrace what was so contrary to the customs of his nation. But in return for their having come so far to do him a kindness, as they said, he promised to provide them with whatever they should need; and allowed them to gain as many of the people as they could. He also gave them a house in Durovernum, the capital of his kingdom, afterwards called Canterbury. They entered in procession, with the cross and banner, singing, "We beseech thee, O Lord, according to all Thy mercy, let Thine anger and Thy fury be turned away from this city, and from Thy holy place, for we have sinned; Alleluia."

They immediately began to practise apostolic manners, abstaining from all the good things of this world, and applying themselves unceasingly, in the intervals of preaching, to prayer, vigils, and fasts. They lived as they taught, and took nothing from their disciples but the bare necessaries of life; and showed themselves ready to endure every suffering, and even death itself, for the truth which they preached. A little way to the eastward of the city stood a church, which had been built in the times of the Romans, and had been dedicated in honour of S. Martin. Here the missioners assembled to sing psalms, to pray, to offer the holy Sacrifice, and to preach and baptize. "Some believed," says Ven. Bede, "and were baptized, admiring the simplicity and innocence of their lives, and the sweetness of their heavenly doctrine. Among others, the king was charmed with the pure life of the holy men, and by their engaging promises, the truth of which they confirmed by many signs and miracles; and he believed, and was baptized. Many then flocked daily to hear

the word, and leaving the heathen rites, were admitted into the unity of the holy Church of Christ." The king did not force any one to embrace the faith which the missioners taught; he only manifested a greater love towards the Christians, as being associated with him in the celestial kingdom. He also gave a site in the capital for a cathedral church, which he liberally endowed.

S. Augustin then went into France to be consecrated a bishop by Virgilius archbishop of Arles, who was then primate of the Gallican Church. He immediately returned to England, and, on the feast of the Nativity, 597, baptized ten thousand persons. Finding the number of missioners too small for the increasing church, he sent two of his company, Laurentius and Peter, a monk, to Rome, to carry to the pontiff the joyful news of his success, and to beg for further assistance. He also asked advice on many doubtful points of discipline, to guide him in his government of the infant church.

S. Gregory without delay sent Mellitus, Justus, Paulinus, and Rufinianus, men of eminent zeal and holiness. They carried with them many things necessary for the service of the Church; sacred vessels and furniture for the altar, ornaments for the churches, vestments for the priests, relics of the holy Apostles and martyrs, and many books. S. Gregory sent letters by them to the king and queen of Kent, thanking them for their kindness to the missioners, and encouraging them to complete their work of regenerating the nation which had been so joyfully begun. He also wrote two letters to S. Augustin. In one of these he expressed his joy in the conversion

of the English, but reminded him that the miracles which God had worked by his hand to accomplish it ought to be to him a source of solemn fear. He called to his remembrance the saying of the Lord when His disciples related that the devils were subject to them, "Rejoice not at this, but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." He also suggested to him directions for preserving humility in the midst of his success, such as the frequent remembrance of former sin and frailty.

The other letter was public, and related to the polity of the new English Church. The use of the pallium, the badge of metropolitan rank, was granted to S. Augustin and his successors at Mass only. He was directed to consecrate twelve bishops, who should be subject to him, but who after his decease should be under the metropolitan jurisdiction of the bishop of London. The possessor of that see was in future to receive the pallium. This arrangement never took place, probably from the greater importance of the city of Canterbury at that time, and with the sanction of S. Gregory, as it seems, the metropolitan dignity was vested for ever in the see of S. Augustin. The archbishop was further directed to send a bishop to the city of York as soon as the people in its neighbourhood were converted. He was to receive authority to consecrate twelve bishops, and to wear the pallium in token of his jurisdiction over them. During the lifetime of S. Augustin he should owe him allegiance as his ecclesiastical superior, but after his death, he should be wholly independent of the southern metropolitan; and their rank should be thenceforth determined by the dates of their conse-

cration. The first archbishop of York was Paulinus, who was consecrated by Justus, a successor of the blessed Augustin.

S. Gregory also sent instructions regarding the matters of discipline on which S. Augustin had consulted him. Of these the following are the principal. He directed that the revenue of the Church should be divided into four portions; of which one should be set aside for the bishop, to enable him to use hospitality as became his office; another part should belong to the clergy; a third should be given to the poor; while a fourth share should be applied to repairing the sacred buildings. Those who lived in community as monks, were enjoined to give to the poor whatever remained after they were supplied with the bare necessaries of life. Clerks in the minor orders, that is, below the rank of a subdeacon, might marry if they could not otherwise keep from sin. Collier takes no notice whatever of this permission, nor of its implied prohibition. His silence regarding it is significant.

As S. Augustin was then sole bishop of the English Church, he was authorized to consecrate other bishops, alone; but if any of the Gallican bishops were present, they might assist, as witnesses. The bishops thus consecrated were in future to assist him. He was forbidden to exercise any jurisdiction over the bishops of Gaul, to the prejudice of the see of Arles; but all the bishops of Britain were "committed to him, that the unlearned might be taught, the weak might be strengthened by persuasion, and the perverse might be corrected by authority." One of the injunctions which he received is so important as well as interesting, that I shall give it in the words of Ven. Bede. "Augustin had asked, Since the Faith is one,

why are the customs of the churches different, so that there is one method of saying mass in the holy Roman Church, and another in the Gallican? Pope Gregory answered, Your brotherhood knows the custom of the Roman Church, in which, as you remember, you were brought up. But I am willing that if you have found anything which may be more pleasing to Almighty God, whether in the Roman Church, in the Gallican, or in any other, you should carefully make choice of it, and should carry into the Church of the English, which is now newly founded, whatever you can gather from many churches, so that its ritual may excel them all. For things are not to be loved for the sake of places, but places for the sake of things. Out of each and every Church then choose what is pious, and devout, and becoming; and, having gathered them into one, teach them as their custom to your English children[1]." I wish that time were allowed me to trace the history of the English ritual, till, in the end of the eleventh century, the blessed Osmund, bishop of Sarum, compiled the Use of that Church, or the Breviary, Missal and Ritual, which was the most perfect of all the Uses known in England. But this would lead me too far from the history of S. Augustin, and to it I must now return.

Besides these directions, S. Gregory added many others of less general interest, which may be found recorded at great length in the Ecclesiastical History of Ven. Bede. Among other things which were forbidden to the new converts was the marriage of first cousins, which the canon law has always interdicted. S. Gregory also recommended Augustin not to destroy

[1] Eccl. Hist. lib. i. c. xxvii.

the pagan temples, but to purify them with hallowed water, and to bear the sacred relics into them, and afterwards to use them as Christian churches. This he directed, in order that the people might be gradually brought to the true faith, by seeing the places of religious association employed in the Divine worship. On the anniversary of the dedication of a church or of the birthday of the holy martyr whose relics it contained, Gregory enjoined the people to erect booths around the building, and encouraged them to celebrate the solemnity with religious festivity. Such was the origin of the village wake.

S. Augustin having thus prosperously begun his mission, consecrated the cathedral church of Canterbury, and dedicated it to the holy Saviour. Its name was afterwards changed to Christ Church. He also built a church and monastery to the eastward, in honour of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, but did not live to consecrate it. It was afterwards named, in honour of its blessed founder, the Abbey of S. Augustin. Within its enclosure he proposed that the bodies of the archbishops of his see, and of the kings of Kent, should be laid. Peter was chosen first abbat, but was drowned not long after in crossing over to France, and was buried at Boulogne. It is now uncertain whether the rule of S. Benedict was observed by the monks of S. Augustin, but it seems probable when we consider the great veneration in which S. Gregory held it, and the active part which he took in the affairs of the English mission. In later ages the superior of this house was a mitred abbat, and had a seat in parliament. Its site is still marked by a ruined gate-house, and other buildings.

With the assistance of K. Ethelbert, S. Augustin,

in 601, invited the remnant of the British bishops to an interview, which took place on a spot called Augustin's Ac or Oak, probably in Worcestershire. He addressed them in a friendly discourse, entreating them to receive him in peace, and to unite with him in the holy labour of preaching the Gospel to their heathen neighbours. Their doctrine seems to have been the same as that of the Catholic Church, though in a few points of discipline they differed from its practice; as for instance in the rule for the observance of Easter, and the tonsure. When he had in vain urged them to unity, he prayed God by a heavenly sign to declare which party He approved. The Britons being with difficulty persuaded to refer the cause to such a decision, a blind man was led into the assembly, and after they had in vain attempted to cure him, it pleased God, at the earnest prayer of S. Augustin, to restore his sight. The Britons were constrained to acknowledge that his "was the true path of justice," yet they still refused to receive him, till they had consulted their brethren. A second interview was appointed, at which seven bishops were present, and many learned men from the monastery of Bangor, over which Dinoth then presided. Before they went to meet Augustin, they consulted a "holy and prudent man," a hermit, as to what they should do. He advised them to accept his proposals if he seemed to be a meek and lowly man; and, as a test of his humility, the recluse bade them take notice whether he rose to meet them at their coming. For some reason S. Augustin received them sitting, and no persuasion could prevail upon them to alter the resolution which this augury had suggested to them. S. Augustin asked only three things—their compliance

with the rule of the Nicene council for the observance of Easter; their assistance in preaching the word of God to the English; and that they should administer the Sacrament of Baptism according to the ritual of the holy Roman Church. They obstinately refused; and thus the glorious privilege of requiting their barbarous conquerors by turning them to the faith, was for ever lost to them; and the labour and the reward were given to the devoted missioners of a distant Church. S. Augustin, moved with a just indignation, foretold at his departure that the punishment of Almighty God would overtake them; which it did in the year 613, as Ussher, Collier, and other authorities state, when Ethelfrid an Anglo-Saxon king of Northumbria, then a Pagan, invaded their country, and made a dreadful slaughter of monks and clerks. But the blessed Augustin was then with Christ.

In 604 he consecrated Mellitus to the see of the East Saxons, of which London was the capital city. K. Ethelbert built a cathedral church there in honour of S. Paul. Justus was in the same year appointed to the see of Rochester, where the same munificent prince founded a church in honour of S. Andrew. K. Ethelbert is honoured by the Church on the 24th of February, the same day on which Luidard also is commemorated.

Having thus lived to see the Faith of Christ obtain a firm footing in England, S. Augustin received the reward of his labours, in 604, about two months after the decease of S. Gregory. As he felt his end approaching, he consecrated Laurentius his successor in the see of Canterbury, in imitation, as Ven. Bede remarks, of the "example of S. Peter, prince

of the Apostles, who consecrated S. Clement his coadjutor and successor." His body was buried near the gate of the church of SS. Peter and Paul in Canterbury, and after its consecration it was removed into the porch. In the same place his successors were laid, till the porch was filled; after which they were buried in the abbey church of SS. Peter and Paul, and in later times in the cathedral. The following sentence was written upon his tomb; "Here rests the Lord Augustin, first archbishop of Canterbury, who was formerly sent by the blessed Gregory, pontiff of the city of Rome, and being assisted by God with miraculous power, brought the king Ethelbert and his nation, from the worship of idols to the Faith of Christ; and, having finished the days of his office in peace, he departed on the seventh of the Kalends of June in the reign of the same king." In 1091 the remains of the saint were removed into the church, and deposited in the east wall, near the altar. In 1221 his head was enclosed in a rich shrine, adorned with gold and precious stones, and the rest of the body was laid in a sumptuous tomb of marble. And finally in 1300 a still more costly place was prepared for it, where it remained undisturbed till the dissolution of the monasteries. It then shared the fate of other sacred things[1].

As the memory of even this blessed man has not escaped the calumny of later ages, and in the land which he was honoured to convert to the true faith, let Collier, an unprejudiced witness, bear testimony to the debt which the English nation owes, through

[1] See Dart's History of the cathedral church of Canterbury.

God, to him. "He was a very graceful person, lived suitable to the business of a missionary, and practised great austerities; and if he fell into any irregularities of temper, if he was too warm in his expostulations, or strained his privilege too far upon the Britons, it ought to be charged upon the score of human infirmities, and covered with his greater merit. This is certain; he engaged in a glorious undertaking, broke through danger and discouragement, and was blessed with wonderful success. He converted the kingdom of Kent by the strength of his own conduct and miracles, and that of the East Saxons, by his agent and coadjutor Mellitus. The spreading of Christianity thus far among the Saxons was a great step towards the conversion of the rest. Let his memory therefore be mentioned with honour, and let us praise God Almighty for making him so powerful an instrument in the happiness of this island[2]."

The synod of Clif or Cloveshove, in 747, enjoined the observance of the day of his deposition with becoming honour; and further directed that his name should be sung in the litanies after the invocation of the blessed Gregory. These injunctions were confirmed in the council of Oxford in 1222.

There was anciently attached to the cathedral church of Canterbury a priory of Benedictine monks, as it seems most probable. It was founded by K. Ethelbert during the life of S. Augustin. The archbishop filled the place of abbat, and its affairs were governed by a prior. In 1003 the secular canons who had gained possession of it were expelled by

[2] Eccl. Hist. B. ii. p. 78.

archbishop Elfric, and their places were filled with Benedictine monks. After another change, these were finally established in it by archbishop Lanfranc, who rebuilt a great part of the cathedral, and the adjoining monastery, and about the year 1080, placed a hundred and fifty monks there. From that time it was frequently called the church or priory of the holy Trinity. During many ages its rich possessions were increased from time to time, till the dissolution; when its estates were seized by K. Henry VIII. But against this house at least no crime could be alleged but its wealth. The king restored a great part of its lands to the cathedral, for the endowment of a dean and twelve canons or prebendaries, besides preachers, minor canons and others.

The city of Canterbury formerly contained many hospitals and a house of Benedictine nuns. The orders of the Augustinian, the Dominican, and the Franciscan Friars had also, each of them, a house there.

The present cathedral was built at different periods, as its varied architecture bears witness. The oldest part belongs to the end of the eleventh century. Additions were gradually made by succeeding archbishops, till the nave and cloisters were built, about the beginning of the fifteenth century. It was once full of chauntries, altars, and shrines of inestimable value, but the hand of sacrilege has left little remaining except the walls. The chapel of S. Thomas was enriched by the offerings of thousands of pilgrims, and his shrine was one mass of gold and jewels. We read that those treasures "filled two great chests, one of which six or eight strong men could do no more

than carry out of the church. All these were taken to the king's use, and the bones of S. Thomas were burnt to ashes, in September 1538."

For ever hallowed be this morning fair,
Blest be the unconscious shore on which ye tread,
And blest the silver Cross, which ye, instead
Of martial banner, in procession bear;
The Cross preceding Him who floats in air,
The pictured Saviour.—By Augustin led,
They come—and onward travel without dread,
Chaunting in barbarous ears a tuneful prayer—
Sung for themselves, and those whom they would free.
Rich conquest waits them;—the tempestuous sea
Of ignorance, that ran so rough and high,
And heeded not the voice of clashing swords,
These good men humble by a few bare words,
And calm with fear of God's divinity.

Wordsworth, Eccl. Sonnets, Part i. xiv.

---

MAY 27.

## Venerable Bede, Priest.

735.

THIS illustrious doctor of the Church was born near the village of Jarrow, in the ancient kingdom of Northumbria, about the year 673. When he was seven years of age he was sent by his relations to the monastery of S. Peter at Weremouth. S. Benedict Biscop, who was then abbat, had founded it in 674, with the assistance of K. Egfrid. Not far from it was the monastery of Jarrow, near the mouth of the river Tyne, which the same holy abbat had dedicated in honour of S. Paul, in the year 684. These houses were then governed by one superior. They afterwards became cells to the abbey of Durham.

While he was still very young, Venerable Bede was removed to the house at Jarrow; and there he spent his life, as he himself says, "in meditating on Holy Scripture, in the observance of the discipline of his rule, and in chaunting the daily Office in the church, in learning, teaching, and writing." He became master of the Latin and Greek languages, and of every science known in that age. The monasteries were then, as in later times, seminaries of learning, both for the young religious, who became teachers in their turn, and for the sons of the nobility who generally received their education in them. Trumbert, a former disciple of S. Chad at Lichfield, was the chief instructor of Ven. Bede in sacred studies; and in the music of the Church he was trained by John the arch-chaunter of S. Peter's in Rome, whom S. Benedict Biscop had brought with him from Italy to teach his monks the exact performance of the divine office.

At the age of nineteen, Bede was ordained deacon by S. John of Beverley, bishop of Hexham, afterwards archbishop of York. With the permission of Ceolfrid his superior, the canons which forbid the admission of so young a man into holy orders were for some reason set aside. When he was thirty years old he was ordained priest by the same holy hands. After his ordination, he devoted himself more exclusively to the study of Holy Scripture, and wrote commentaries on a great part of it. In 724 he composed a book on the six ages of the world, which made some ignorant persons accuse him of heresy. He was at great pains to clear himself from the charge, and took occasion in his defence to protest against any attempt to conjecture the time when the

end of the world will come, which God has hid in His secret counsels. He wrote the lives of many holy men of his time; among others, of the first five abbats of his monastery, and of S. Cuthbert, bishop of Lindisfarne. He also compiled a martyrology, containing the names and short notices of the lives of the saints whom the Church honoured yearly in his age.

His great work is the Ecclesiastical History of the English nation, from the landing of Julius Cæsar in Britain till the year 731. It is divided into five books. He was assisted in it by many of the learned men of that age, who furnished him with information regarding the various parts of the kingdom where they lived. Thus Albinus, abbat of S. Augustin's in Canterbury, sent him memoirs of the history of the south-eastern counties. They were brought to Jarrow by Northelm, a priest of London, who gave Ven. Bede much information orally regarding them, and undertook a journey to Rome to search in the archives of the Church, with the permission of Gregory III, the reigning pontiff. He discovered many original letters of S. Gregory the Great, and other documents connected with the mission of S. Augustin to Britain. From Daniel, bishop of Winchester, S. Bede learned many particulars of the history of Wessex and Sussex. His own researches, aided by the monks of Lindisfarne, sufficed for the kingdom of Northumbria; and regarding Mercia and Essex he gained his information from the religious of Lestinghen. This history was one of his latest works. Besides these he composed a number of smaller treatises chiefly in illustration and defence of Catholic doctrine and practice, of which he has left a catalogue continued till very near the time of his death. His

writings have ever been highly valued for their remarkable accuracy. S. Boniface, the Apostle of Germany, requested Egbert, archbishop of York, to send him some of Ven. Bede's works, for his mission. Many of the lessons in the daily Office of the Latin Church are taken from his homilies. Thus, as it is remarked by Turgot, prior of Durham, and afterwards bishop of S. Andrew's in Scotland, in the 12th century, "Ven. Bede while alive was concealed in the furthest corner of the world, but after his death he became known in every part of it and still lives in his writings."

Soon after he was ordained priest, pope Sergius wrote to his superior, desiring him to send Ven. Bede to Rome; but the death of the chief Bishop in the same year prevented him. Numbers of disciples were attracted by his name to Jarrow; and many of them became eminent for learning and holiness. He seems to have rarely left his enclosure, but employed the intervals of study in manual labour, as his rule enjoined. In the year before his decease, he visited the city of York, and Egbert, who had been only lately consecrated to the see, invited him to return in the following year. But his last sickness had then come upon him, and he could only write a letter to the archbishop, filled with advice regarding the government of the Church, which his venerable age entitled him to offer. He urged him to be careful that every one should know the Lord's Prayer and the Creed by heart, and that those who were ignorant of the Latin should be taught to repeat them in their own language. For this purpose he said that he had translated them. He complained of the relaxation of discipline, and of the irregularities which had crept

into the monastic life in England. The infrequency of holy communion he also bitterly lamented, and remarked that many persons who lived devout and holy lives, and who then communicated only at Christmas, Epiphany, and Easter, might easily do so on every Sunday and festival of the Apostles and martyrs. We learn from this letter that the faithful in that age received the holy communion less frequently in England, than in any other part of the Catholic Church.

In 735, Ven. Bede was translated to glory. The circumstances of his happy passage are related by his disciple Cuthbert. Fifteen days before the feast of Easter, which happened in that year on the 17th April, he was seized with great oppression in breathing. It lasted till the Ascension, but without pain. The days of the Paschal joy he spent in unceasing praise, which often burst forth, even during the night, in holy hymns and anthems. He was still able to devote part of his time to his disciples, and exhorted them to meditate on their last end, to rouse them from spiritual sloth. He would give God thanks for his sickness, and would sometimes quote the words of S. Ambrose, "I have not so lived among you as to be ashamed, nor do I fear to die, for we have a merciful Lord."

He was then engaged in making a collection from the writings of S. Isidore of Seville, and in a translation of the Gospel of S. John into the Anglo-saxon language. He lived to finish only the first five chapters. This is one of many instances of the care which the Church of the middle ages showed in instructing her people in the Word of God. It is true that she imposed salutary restraints on their use of it,

and she certainly believed that its promiscuous distribution was no part of the Christian scheme, otherwise the art of printing, which alone could place it in the hands of the multitude, would not have been withheld from her for fourteen centuries. But "that just and accurate versions of the holy Scriptures were studiously withheld from the people in the middle ages," says a learned author, "is a modern error which has been so often exposed that any consideration of it is almost superfluous. In proportion as the modern languages began to supersede the Latin, we find the zeal of holy men directed to the end of supplying versions of the Scripture. It was Hedwige, the saintly young queen of Poland, an assiduous reader of the Scripture, and devoted to the propagation of the Catholic Faith, who caused to be made, in 1390, the first translation of them into the Polish tongue. It was James de Voragine, archbishop of Genoa in the thirteenth century, compiler of the Golden Legend, who translated the whole Bible into Italian. Again, in 1471, it is Nicholas Malermius, a Camaldolese monk of S. Matthias de Muriano at Venice, who gave a new literal translation of the Bible into the vulgar Italian, under the title of Biblia Volgare Historiata. The old French versions, by Guiars des Moulins, Raoul de Presles, and others, were in every library; and the whole Bible was translated into French in the reign of king Charles V.; and long before the invention of printing, versions of it were given in most of the European languages. Before Luther appeared, several editions had been printed in Italy, Spain, France, Germany, Holland, and Bohemia. Although many German translations from the Vulgate had before been printed, yet in

1534 we find the prospect of a new edition by Luther so favourably received by the Catholics, that he said on one occasion, 'Our adversaries read the Bible translated more than our own people. I believe that Duke George has read it with more care than all the nobility that hold to our side.'"

On the Tuesday before Ascension-day Venerable Bede became worse, yet he continued to teach his disciples, and urged them to diligence, as the time of his departure was near. He passed the whole of that night in prayer and praise. Very early next morning he resumed his instructions till the hour of terce, or nine o'clock, when the Litanies of Rogation were sung, and the holy relics were borne in solemn procession attended by the whole convent. One of the brethren remained with him to write what he should dictate. About the hour of none, or three o'clock, he said to Cuthbert, "I have a few trifles in a box; pepper, incense, and *oraria*[1]; run and fetch them, and call the brethren of the monastery, that I may distribute these among them." When they were come, he gave each of them a little memorial of his love, and besought them all to be mindful of his soul in their prayers, and especially when they offered the adorable Sacrifice. The brethren wept abundantly, but he comforted them and said, "The time of my freedom is at hand. I long to be dissolved and to be with Christ, for my soul desires to see Christ my King in His glory." At the Vespers of that day, as he was singing the antiphon, *O Rex*

[1] Handkerchiefs, or perhaps stoles, or, as some say, rosaries, which were first called Bedes from the name of this holy father, as they suppose.

*gloriæ*—"O King of glory, Lord of virtues, Who didst ascend this day in triumph above all heavens, leave us not orphans, but send the promise of the Father upon us, the Spirit of truth: Alleluia;" when he came to the words, Leave us not orphans, he wept much. And after the office of the hour was finished, he repeated it again, and often during the rest of the day, with many tears. "And we wept along with him," says Cuthbert, "reading and weeping by turns."

In the evening, Wilberth, a young disciple, to whom he was dictating, said to him, "Dearest master, one sentence remains." "Write quickly," he replied. "It is done." "You have well said, it is consummated. Now take my head in your hands, for I love to sit opposite my little oratory, where I used to pray and call upon my Father." He was laid on the floor of his cell, upon a cloth of hair, and received the last anointing of the Church[1], and the blessed Body of our Lord Jesus, in the presence of the whole community. He then gave each of them the kiss of peace; and as he was singing the doxology, *Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto*, his spirit passed to God, early in the morning of the feast of the Ascension, the 26th May. The cell was filled with the most fragrant odour, far exceeding the rarest frankincense.

His remains were buried at Jarrow. They were removed to the abbey-church of Durham by Elfred, the sacristan, in 1022, and were laid in the tomb of S. Cuthbert. In the middle of the following cen-

[1] S. Mark vi. 13. S. James v. 14.

tury, bishop Pudsey enclosed them in a rich casket of gold, and finally, in 1370, they were translated, by Richard of Barnard castle, into the Galilee or Ladye chapel of the abbey, which Pudsey had built. "There was on the south side, betwixt two pillars," says Davies, "a goodly monument all of blue marble, the height of a yard from the ground, supported by five pillars, at every corner, one, and under the midst, one; and above the said Through of marble pillars stood a second shrine of S. Cuthbert, wherein the bones of the holy man S. Bede were enshrined, being accustomed to be taken down every festival day, when there was any solemn procession, and carried by four monks in time of procession and divine service: which being ended, they conveyed it into the Galilee, and set it upon the said tomb again, having a fair cover of wainscot, very curiously gilt, and appointed to draw up and down over the shrine, when they pleased to show the sumptuousness thereof." The shrine disappeared in the sixteenth century, but the relics of S. Bede escaped the desecration with which those sacred memorials of the saints in the southern counties of England were then visited. They were decently buried under the tomb.

The feast of Ven. Bede was formerly kept in some places in England on the 26th of May, with a commemoration only in the office of S. Augustin. In other places it was deferred till the following day. Alcock, bishop of Ely in the fifteenth century, appointed it to be observed in his diocess on the 13th of March. Some congregations of the Benedictine order have long kept the 29th of October in honour of him, as part of the Latin Church does at this day.

The title of Venerable was probably first given to S. Bede in the ninth age, out of a peculiar respect, as Mabillon proves. The second council of Aix la Chapelle, in 836, mentions him, as "The Venerable, and in modern times, Admirable doctor." He was honoured as a Saint and included in foreign martyrologies before that time. S. Boniface called him the Lamp of the English Church.

These in life's distant even
  Shall shine serenely bright,
As in the autumnal heaven
  Mild rainbow tints at night;
When the last shower is stealing down,
  And ere they sink to rest,
The sun-beams weave a parting crown
  For some sweet woodland nest.

The promise of the morrow,
  Is glorious on that eve,
Dear as the holy sorrow
  When good men cease to live.
When brightening ere it die away
  Mounts up their altar-flame,
Still tending with intenser ray
  To heaven from whence it came.

Say not it dies, that glory,
  'Tis caught unquenched on high,
Those saintlike brows so hoary
  Shall wear it in the sky.
No smile is like the smile of death,
  When all good musings past
Rise wafted with the parting breath,
  The sweetest thought the last.

Christian Year, p. 289.

V.

SERMONS ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS AND OCCASIONS.

By the Rev. E. B. RAMSAY.

8vo. Price 7*s.* 6*d.*

VI.

*By the same Author,*

A CATECHISM,

Compiled and arranged for the use of St. John's Chapel, Edinburgh.

*New Edition.* 18mo. Price 2*s.*